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MEMOIRS

OF

HENRY THE GREAT.

LONDON:
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Apres l'honneur des Martiaux Combats
Garder les bons et punir les Cautelles
Faire Iustice et trancher les Debats
Des Plaidereaux Sont vertus immortelles.

HENRY THE GREAT.

In the armour worn upon his triumphal return to Paris after subjecting Sedan in 1606

Engraved by J. Swaine, from the very rare print by Gaultier

Published by Harding & Co Gordon May 1824

MEMOIRS

OF

HENRY THE GREAT,

AND OF THE

COURT OF FRANCE

DURING HIS REIGN.

S. W. H. Ireland

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

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1824.

PREFACE.

The interest excited towards Historical Biography by the elegant compositions of Miss Aikin in her Memoirs of Elizabeth and King James, first drew the Author's mind to the study of the subject which has led to the present publication. Not only is the Life of Henry the Great of peculiar interest, even divested of its connection with the other powers of Europe, but, when viewed in combination with the momentous æra of Elizabeth, which occupies, within seven years, the whole period of his reign, the Memoirs of these Monarchs and of their respective Courts acquire additional interest, and mutually tend to the illustration of each other.

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The only record of the reign of Henry the Fourth known to the English reader is a translation of Perefixe, the preceptor of Louis the Fourteenth, grandson of the subject of our history. That work, however valuable as a dry detail of historical facts, possesses but little interest for the general reader, and does not convey the slightest information upon the domestic history of this illustrious individual, whose private life will be found as extraordinary as his public career was brilliant and victorious.

Besides the authorities quoted in the following Volumes, manuscript documents in the Royal Library at Paris, and other collections, have been consulted, for the purpose of verifying the statements of former writers, and contributing additional facts to what have hitherto appeared relative to the subject of these Memoirs.

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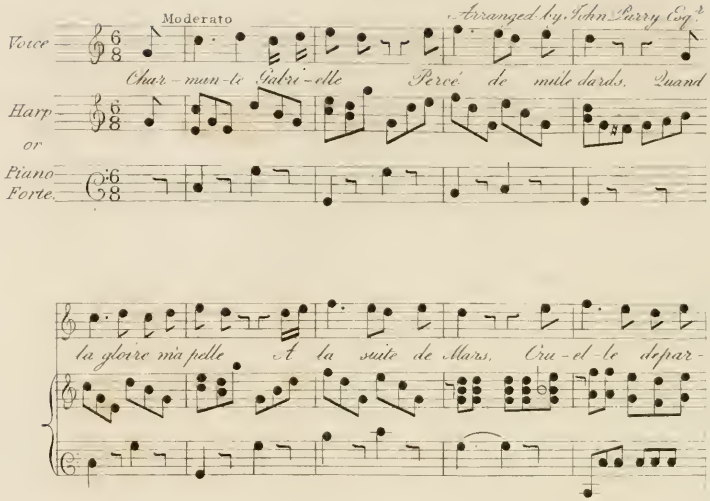
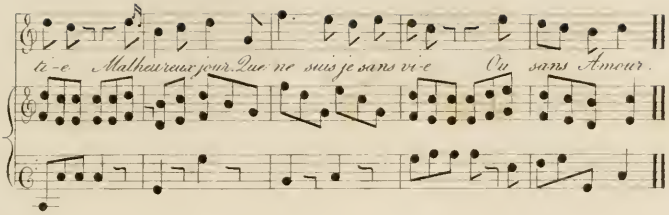
CHARMANTE GABRIELLE.

XI.

Partage ma couronne,
Le prix de ma valeur;
Je la tiens de Bellone
Tenez la de mon cœur:
Cruelle departie
Malheureux jour,
C'est trop peu d'une vie
Pour tant d'Amour.



The above air traditionally handed down and never before published is the original composition of Henry IV. of France.

The music so often printed and attributed to that monarch is of a more modern date; the accompanying notes, on the contrary, bear every characteristic stamp of the æra when that prince flourished?

LIFE

OF

HENRY THE GREAT

AND

MEMOIRS OF HIS COURT.

CHAPTER I.

Preliminary reflections.—State of Europe from Francis the First until the birth of Henry the Fourth.—Account of Henry the Second and Francis the Second.—Portraits of Catherine of Medicis.—Claude duke of Guise.—Admiral Coligny.—The prince of Condé.—The constable Montmorency.—Accession of Charles the Ninth to the throne.—Religious dissensions.—Sanguinary wars of the League.—Assassination of the duke of Guise.—Precepts instilled into Charles the Ninth by the queen mother.—Death of the constable Montmorency.—Lineage of Henry the Fourth.

IT is very difficult for princes who are born to a throne in peaceful times, to attain a complete insight into human nature, and learn the great art of reigning. How can credulous and confiding inexperience discern truth, environed by the illusions of greatness and all the seductive blandishments of flattery? But Providence, in according to nations its greatest blessing, in be-

stowing upon them good kings, very frequently subjects those heroes to the most rigorous trials, and thus prepares them to fulfil in a worthy manner the high destinies for which they are reserved. Charles the Fifth, surnamed *the Wise*, and Louis the Twelfth, so justly esteemed *the Father of his People*, as well as Henry *the Great*, were indebted to misfortunes for many of those virtues which have ennobled their memories. It was in the vortex of the most turbulent and sanguinary factions that Charles the Fifth acquired that extraordinary wisdom which imbues princes with the true genius of royalty; it is that knowledge which duly discriminates how lenity and firmness should be employed; it teaches the mind to be flexible with dignity, and resolute with discretion; it can reanimate the public feeling, conciliate opposing interests, penetrate secret intentions, subdue characters, and appreciate the due limits of sovereign power, that is only supreme during a calm, but which at the period of storms cannot maintain itself, except through the medium of prudence and skill combined with integrity. Charles the Fifth stood in need of all the resources of reason, and the ascendency which an enlightened intellect, and a gentle, yielding, and patient character, produce in the management of state affairs: to retrieve, to reunite, and to pacify, were the uniform employments of his reign, which so truly invested him with the glorious epithet of *the Wise*. At the periods of disgrace and exile, princes ascertain

the real value of devotion and of friendship; true adherents are not then occupied with the frivolous employment of pleasing, they only think of serving their masters: in order to acquire partisans, princes are obliged to conquer private resentments; the enemy who returns to them, uniformly finds that they are disposed to forget the past, and by this means personal interest accustoms them to clemency. Before Louis the Twelfth ascended the throne, he was oppressed and persecuted; he stood in need of friends, he learned how to pardon and to select them; and this was acquiring a knowledge how to reign. Henry the Fourth was the most humane of kings. A greatness of soul and generosity of principle led him to perform every thing that would have been dictated by the most consummate policy: the brightest actions of his life were only the happy fruits of the first emotions of his heart; but he was indebted to a manly education, and to the school of adversity, for the empire he possessed over himself, for his knowledge of men and affairs, and that undeviating perseverance which surmounts every opposition. This great prince was at the same time the most skilful captain during a belligerent age, the monarch most worthy to reign over a generous nation, and the most amiable of Frenchmen. By his courage, his loyalty, his candour, and his gaiety, he completely formed the national character: all French kings should select him as a model, for to reign as a true Frenchman it is

necessary to resemble him. Henry the Fourth was so enthusiastically beloved by his people, he has left such dear recollections, that if all the memoirs of his time, and every thing that has been written concerning his life, was buried in oblivion, his history would still be found in the traditions handed down among the families of all classes of society; from thence the leading traits might be collected, and the most interesting anecdotes derived from the workshop of the mechanic, beneath the humble thatch, as well as in the palace and the mansion of the noble.

Before we enter upon the heroic and popular history of Henry the Great, we will cast a rapid glance at the events that occurred in France from the reign of Francis the First until the birth of our hero. This statement will be found necessary, as many of the circumstances that characterised the annals of Henry derived their origin from the measures pursued during the periods alluded to.

It is necessary to place in the rank of monarchs who have honoured a throne, all those who, notwithstanding great reverses and faults, have preserved a happy influence over the national feeling, and have left glorious traces of their reigns. Francis the First was endowed with all the fiery impetuosity of the soldier, without being gifted with the talents of a consummate general. His intrepid bravery gave a splendour to his person, and was detrimental to the state; but this prince was neither divested of capacity nor political

views. In combining economy with magnificence, notwithstanding unfortunate wars, he knew how to protect arts and letters, and to liquidate the debts of the state. He united amiable qualities with endearing virtues. Other monarchs had regulated etiquette, Francis did more:—his courtesy, his grace, and his refined taste, regulated the tone and the manners which a king of France ought to possess in order to please his subjects, his courtiers, and his mistresses, to gain the hearts of his soldiers, to captivate men of letters and all those connected with the arts. He was the first who ascertained that Frenchmen can pardon every thing in a sovereign provided he is neither vindictive nor ferocious; and that he cannot be reproached with a vulgarity of conduct and duplicity. Francis the First, several years prior to his death, atoned for the faults of his youth, by restoring peace to his subjects, and re-establishing order in his finances; independent of the sum arising from the revenues of the current year, he left four millions in his treasury, which was at that period a very considerable sum. His son, Henry the Second, succeeded, when that monarch recalled the constable Montmorency, who had been banished from the court during the preceding reign. In 1551 the war again broke out in consequence of the League formed between Henry and the electors of Saxony and Brandenburgh, under the pretext of defending the freedom of Germany, and affording succour to the

princes who were oppressed by the emperor. This disastrous war was fomented by the advice of two ambitious rivals, the duke of Guise and the constable Montmorency, each endeavouring to supplant the other in the midst of these dissensions. Henry took possession of the imperial cities of Metz, Toul, and Verdun, when a female prevented him from extending his conquests: Mary of Austria, sister of Charles the Fifth, who then governed the Low Countries, raised troops, and proceeded to ravage the province of Picardy. Henry was compelled to fly and succour his frontiers; after which, animated by that spirit of vengeance denominated a just reprisal, whereby thousands of innocent victims are sacrificed, that prince proceeded to Flanders, when the whole country became one scene of fire and slaughter.

While the German empire and France recommenced a vindictive and cruel war, which was doomed to continue for a series of years, Edward the Sixth of England died, and his sister Mary ascended the throne. In the course of the ensuing year she married the sombre, suspicious Philip of Spain, son of Charles the Fifth: an ill assorted union, which, by annexing additional aggrandizement to the house of Austria, rendered that power still more formidable to France.

Henry the Second beat the Imperialists at the battle of Renti; but he did not know how to profit by the victory, which was therefore productive of no favourable results to the French monarch.

Charles the Fifth having for forty years success-

fully employed all the activity of an ambitious mind, as well as every political chicanery, to extend his dominions, at length experienced only fatigue at commanding so vast a population, and felt the necessity of repose. He entered into a five years' truce with the French king; divested himself of the crown of Spain, and his possessions in Flanders and Italy, in favour of his son Philip the Second; he also resigned the empire to his brother Ferdinand, and then retired to the Monastery of Saint Just, hoping in that seclusion to obliterate the remembrances of so many tumultuous scenes: enviable state of forgetfulness, which can never be enjoyed by those whom false glory has prompted to undertake unjust enterprises, and to shed torrents of human blood!

After the lapse of a few months the truce was broken. Henry despatched the duke of Guise to Italy at the head of an army, under pretext of conquering the Milanese, over which he pretended to have some claims, but above all to support the pretensions of the ambitious Pope Paul the Fourth, of the house of Caraffa, who was desirous of procuring for his nephews, at the expense of the emperor, certain establishments in the kingdom of Naples. The duke of Guise performed nothing while in Italy deserving of his reputation; but the constable Montmorency proved even more unfortunate in France. Mary of England, wife of Philip the Second of Spain, declared war against France; Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy, divested of his states by Henry, was

placed at the head of the combined armies of Spain and England, while France was deprived of one of its ablest generals, the duke of Guise, and the army which he commanded in Italy. The duke of Savoy laid siege to the city of Saint Quentin, which the constable advanced to assist; when the duke of Savoy attacking the French army, Montmorency lost the battle, and was made prisoner, as well as the marshal Saint André; count d'Enghien, brother of the prince of Condé, was killed; the city of Saint Quentin surrendered at discretion, and admiral Coligny, who had defended the place, remained in the hands of the victors. France would have been irretrievably lost, had her enemies known how to profit by this signal victory. It is said, that a courier having been forwarded to announce this intelligence to Charles the Fifth in his retirement, that prince, after ascertaining the brilliant victory and the capture of all the French generals, enquired of the messenger from whence he had set out? From Madrid, was the reply: I should have thought, resumed Charles, that you had arrived from Paris, where the army of the king, my son, ought to have been after such a glorious defeat.—France was saved by the indolence of her enemies: the duke of Guise was recalled, and appointed lieutenant-general of the kingdom; whose presence alone inspired confidence in the troops. He shortly after became master of Calais, which had continued in possession of the English for two hundred and ten years; he also captured Guise

and Thionville, while the duke of Nevers entered Charlemont, and marshal de Termes, Dunkirk and Saint Vinox. These brilliant successes were productive of a peace, by no means honourable, because it was entered into with too much precipitancy. It has been supposed that the duchess of Valentinois, whose grand-daughter espoused the constable's son, prevented the duke of Guise from taking advantage of these conquests by still continuing the war for a few months. That woman, who, notwithstanding her advanced age, maintained the greatest ascendency over the mind of the king, urged the prince to depute the constable Montmorency, then a prisoner at Madrid, to offer terms of peace to Spain; and thus was concluded the treaty of Cateau Cambresis, in opposition to the advice of the king's council, and the most urgent representations on the part of the duke of Guise. The conquests acquired on either side were given up, with the exception of Calais, which remained to France; a marriage was then concluded between Elizabeth daughter of Henry, and Philip the Second, who had shortly before become a widower in consequence of the demise of Mary of England; and Margaret, another daughter of the French king, became united to the duke of Savoy, who, in consequence of this treaty, again acquired possession of his states. These marriages and the peace were celebrated, according to the custom of those times, with warlike festivities; for the representation of combats was coveted at the very moment when a solemn

renunciation of war was proclaimed. A tournament in consequence took place at Paris, which was characterised by all the magnificence of courtly splendour and the dexterity of the nobles who attended the festival, while Henry the Second, who particularly excelled in those chivalric exercises, drew down upon himself the regards of all present. The festival was concluded, but the monarch, notwithstanding the importunities of the queen, was bent upon another tilting-match with the earl of Montgomery, who in vain refused to accept of the dangerous honour. He, however, received the king's orders to commence the joust, and in this unfortunate encounter, a splinter from the earl's broken lance entering the vizor of the monarch's helmet, inflicted so deep a wound in his eye that he expired eleven days afterwards.

Henry the Second, when upon the point of death, issued peremptory orders that Montgomery should not be molested in consequence of this involuntary regicide; but at a subsequent period the earl took up arms in favour of the Calvinists, and being made prisoner at the battle of Castelnaudary, he was beheaded. From a singular fatality, the father of this same Montgomery had dangerously wounded Francis the First, who having in wanton sport assailed his dwelling with snow-balls, Montgomery, during the pastime, hurled from the casement some burning embers of wood, which struck the king, and wounded him grievously.

The demise of Henry and the youthful age of

his successor Francis the Second, who had only attained his sixteenth year, produced great changes in the court. The applicants for places in the administration of public affairs were numerous; the queen mother, Catherine de Medicis, aspired to assume the greatest control; but the duke of Guise, and his brother the cardinal of Lorraine, uncles of Mary Stuart the young regent queen, having acquired the reins of government, Catherine, finding it impossible to dispossess or exclude them, apparently coalesced with their measures. The duchess of Valentinois was exiled from court, and the constable Montmorency confined to his castle of Chantilly.

"Catherine de Medicis," says M. Anquetil, author of the Spirit of the League, "should neither be judged by the libels that have appeared, converting her into a monster, nor the fulsome panegyrics that have attributed to her every virtue. She was handsome, of noble stature, majestic, and engaging: she loved all the fine arts, and was their protectress." But if she was not the secret cause of the execrable massacre of Saint Bartholomew, it is at least a known fact that she might have prevented that atrocious catastrophe: from this act she may be judged; and that one deed is far more vilifying to her memory than all the calumny which libellers have heaped upon her. Catherine preserved this horrible secret; she presided at the execution of the sanguinary plot; she procured the approval of the king her son! To dwell upon such

an event is to depict her amply; and the endeavour to penetrate into the dark recesses of so black a soul, would only tend to degrade the art of searching into the human character.'

Claude duke of Guise had acquired great reputation during the preceding reign. He was looked upon as the most able captain in Europe; and he possessed a greatness of soul which elevated him above his illustrious birth. These exalted sentiments announced such a high destiny, that from the earliest period of his life the eyes of all were riveted upon him; as if every one expected extraordinary actions from the man who seemed framed to command others, and to subjugate every thing. It appeared that there was no want of ambition to propel him to undertake the most distinguished part, and that fortune would naturally usher him to the scene. Faithful in friendship, affable with the soldiers, modest in success, and generous towards his rivals when they were humbled, he displayed no pride but on the most arduous and dangerous occasions. His bitterest enemies have allowed that he possessed the most sincere attachment for religion and the state. The cardinal of Lorraine, his brother, combined a powerful mind with extensive knowledge, and he was in consequence called by the Italians, the pope of the other side of the mountains.

Anthony of Bourbon, king of Navarre, first prince of the blood, had more right than any other to take a part in the government. It was

due to his exalted birth; but the gentleness, the moderation of his character, and his pacific inclinations, estranged him from public affairs, and rendered him little capable of interfering, at a period when effrontery and a taste for intrigue were, in themselves, sufficient to assume the place of real talents.

Louis, prince of Condé, younger brother of the king of Navarre, was the most sensible and brilliant noble of the court. As yet too young to play a distinguished part, he acquired the most useful science to be obtained at that period: he learned how to dissemble, by concealing under the cloak of a thoughtless exterior the most consummate ambition.

Gaspard de Coligny, lord of Chatillon, admiral of France, was endowed with great talents, which he placed to the most unfortunate use. It has been said of him, that he only displayed them against his God, his king, and his country*. He abjured the catholic persuasion, in order to be elected leader of the protestant party; he took up arms against his monarch; he invited foreigners into France; he maintained, at their head, a long and cruel war; and he ravaged the provinces without pity, where the most barbarous excesses were committed under his eyes, and by his command. An audacious apostate, a rebel subject, and an unnatural citizen, he was, besides, accused of the murder of Claude de Guise. Many

* See Notes to Sully's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 58.

men far less culpable have left to posterity a tarnished reputation; and yet that of Coligny has escaped, owing to his having filled, with considerable talent, the post of chief of a party; and in consequence found as panegyrists an host of brave warriors, and the whole body of Calvinists, by whom he was looked upon as the hero and martyr of their sect: in short, the horror of his death effaces from the eyes of posterity the remembrance of his imperfections. We only call to mind his brilliant qualifications, his valour, his military fame, and the austerity of his morals; but the impartial historian can never rank him in the catalogue of truly great men.

The constable Montmorency was, on the contrary, uniformly faithful to his religious tenets, his country, and his king: all that he required was good fortune.

Though almost uniformly beaten, he was nevertheless an experienced general, and enjoyed that reputation. He had talents for the administration of finance, but they were not called into action. He displayed in the councils of state great integrity and knowledge; but he possessed little influence in public affairs. His attachment for his sovereigns did not preserve him from being exiled; but he had sufficient merit and virtues to atone for his want of success: he acquired glory in the midst of reverses, and was a great man in despite of fortune.

Such were the most conspicuous personages

who figured at the court of France during the period in question.

A few months after the decease of Henry the Second, a conspiracy was discovered at Amboise, where the court then resided, the motives and intent of which were never properly ascertained. It appears that the plan was to obtain possession of the person of the young king, and to send away the queen mother and the Guises. Admiral Coligny was accused of having formed this project, and the prince of Condé as being secret leader of the enterprise. This affair was serviceable to the ambitious views of the duke of Guise, who was a second time declared lieutenant-general of the kingdom. However, nothing is more to be suspected of calumny than the reports originating in alleged conspiracies that are stifled, of which no proofs are adduced, and whose authors none dares to punish. These vague and mysterious accusations did not intimidate the admiral; for at an extraordinary council assembled at Fontainebleau, he chose that moment to present a remonstrance in the name of all the Calvinists in the kingdom, for the purpose of obtaining liberty of conscience, adding, that he spoke in behalf of fifty thousand men. This solicitation, which appeared more like a threat, irritated the duke of Guise; who replied, that he would march against them one hundred thousand good catholics, of whom he would take the command.

The result of this council was, that the states

should be assembled at Orleans. Shortly after the prince of Condé was arrested, under pretext of a new plot: he was tried, and sentenced to lose his head; but Olivier, the chancellor, by his wisdom and advice, saved the life of the condemned. Queen Catherine, who beheld with equal disquietude and jealousy the authority of the Guises, which augmented daily, restored the prince of Condé to liberty, with a view of opposing to them a powerful rival, who, placing himself at the head of the Calvinists, would at least keep their power in equipoise. By this means Catherine favoured a party she dreaded, and from which the state had every thing to apprehend; she acted in opposition to the defenders of the catholic faith and the rights of royalty: but the authority of the Guises was inimical to hers, and might overpower it. Francis the Second died; and immediately after his decease, the queen mother made his successor, Charles the Ninth, write a letter to the parliament, bearing date the 8th of December, 1560, wherein he stated, "That as his tender age would not permit him to govern alone, and confiding in the prudence and virtue of the queen his mother, he supplicated her to assume the administration of public affairs, aided by the sage counsels of the king of Navarre, together with the notables and great personages who had formed the council of the deceased monarch."

The parliament replied by approving this resolution, and returning its thanks to the king.

Although the queen had not been nominated regent, she assumed to herself the supreme authority, which she uniformly preserved during the whole of this inauspicious reign. The constable Montmorency was, for the second time, recalled from banishment. During his first interview with the young king, he bent one knee to the ground, kissed his hand, and not being able to restrain his tears, that venerable nobleman exclaimed: "Sire, let not existing troubles intimidate your mind; place confidence in your faithful subjects; I am ready, equally with them, to sacrifice my life in order to preserve your crown." The subsequent conduct of the constable manifested the sincerity of this assertion.

The king of Navarre appeared favourable to the Huguenots, as they were called. The prince of Condé openly professed the reformed religion; and he was, equally with the king of Navarre, intimately connected with admiral Coligny.

The duke of Guise, the constable Montmorency, and marshal de Saint André, fearing for the safety of the catholic religion in consequence of the union that subsisted between Catherine and the king of Navarre, formed a league between themselves, which was called the Triumvirate. The states general assembled at Orleans were merely the spectators of passing events: eloquent speeches were delivered, tending only to irritate the public feeling. The chancellor de l'Hôpital spoke with much wisdom: he exhorted the adoption of pacific measures, and displeased

the intriguers and the ambitious of all parties; that is to say, by far the greater number. The president of the nobility demanded a reform of the clergy and the magistracy: he saw nothing without reproach but the nobility, and endeavoured to demonstrate that their claims and privileges should alone be respected. The orator on the popular side inveighed most vehemently against the ecclesiastics: he was refuted with equal asperity by the advocate for the clergy; and it is generally in this negative manner the public welfare animates large assemblies. What had excited the greatest noise was, the wealth of the church, an unceasing object of popular envy. It is, notwithstanding this, no less true, that those riches were more legitimately acquired, and, generally speaking, more usefully employed, than all the remaining wealth of the kingdom. These clamours, however, were at length silenced by a generous action. The heads of the church offered to contribute a certain sum payable at the expiration of ten years: this was the *first gratuitous offering;* it was accepted by the court, and the states adjourned.

The conference of Poisy was held at the same period. It was an assembly at which the bishops and doctors were to hear the Calvinists, with the intention of refuting, and in the hope of enlightening them. These were, in fact, two armies in presence of each other, determined to combat, and resolved not to yield a single point. Men of high reputation, assembled to pronounce publicly upon oratorical harangues, necessarily pos-

sess an emulation to know, and a species of eloquence that is very prejudicial in important affairs. The Calvinist ministers boldly demanded that the bishops should not assist at the conferences as judges, but merely as parties. The queen gave for answer, that the king would preside: an equivocal reply, which held out a prospect of equality to the Calvinists without annihilating the superiority of the bishops. These precautions, however, were only fatal condescensions, which weakened, in the eyes of the Huguenots, the majesty of the catholic faith and the royal authority.

The most celebrated of the protestant orators was Theodore Beza, an ingenious sophist, who was combated by the eloquence of the cardinal of Lorraine, and the learned Claude d'Espence, doctor in theology, a man of profound erudition, rare sagacity, and the first theologian of his age. These conferences produced no other effect than that of exasperating the catholics, and increasing the audacity of the Calvinists. When we consider that they were all leaders of new doctrines, on examining their lives, and studying their characters, there can be little doubt but religion merely served as a pretext to conceal their aspiring designs. These sects appear to have been formed in a spirit of ambition and independence; by exalted sentiments, afterwards buoyed up by pride, emboldened by success, and envenomed by reverses and persecutions. If these unfortunate disputes inundated France with blood,

we must not regard religion as the cause, which shuns and reprehends all the iniquities they produced; but attribute the result to turbulent passions, that aimed at nothing less than breaking through the barriers of social order, and disuniting the most sacred ties.

The court intrigues, at the commencement of the reign of Charles the Ninth, created a ferment in the public mind, which was increased by a quarrel that occurred at Vassy (a small town on the frontiers of Champaine,) between the protestants and the domestics of the duke of Guise: many persons were killed in the affray, and the duke himself received a wound in the cheek while in the act of appeasing the tumult. His attendants becoming furious on beholding the blood of their lord, proceeded to acts of desperation; nothing could stay their furious career; the massacre became dreadful, and this event proved the source of a new civil war. The prince of Condé took possession of Orleans, and the protestants became masters of Rouen, and many other cities, while the populace in all directions flew to arms. The royal forces proceeded to lay siege to Rouen; and the king of Navarre, who commanded the place, received a wound which proved fatal to him. The death of that prince was followed by the taking of Rouen, and the battle of Dreux, in which the protestant army was beaten, and marshal Saint André lost his life. Brantome informs us, that towards the end of the conflict the marshal's horse was over-

thrown, and the general taken by a Huguenot, who placed him on his horse behind him: that shortly after, a person named d'Aubigny, who entertained a deadly hatred to the marshal, on account of his enjoying confiscated property that had belonged to him, discharged a pistol from behind the general, the ball from which entered his head, and stretched him lifeless on the spot.

It is a remarkable circumstance, that the commanders of the two contending armies, the prince of Condé and the constable Montmorency, were alike made prisoners. Although the duke of Guise had no command in the royal army, it was, nevertheless, through his conduct that the victory was decided, by falling with impetuosity upon the enemy at the moment he saw that they were weakened. The result of this overthrow raised the character of the duke of Guise to the highest pitch. By the deaths of the king of Navarre and marshal Saint André, as well as the constable's being made prisoner, who had been his colleague in power, he had no other opponents to fear, and his rival the prince of Condé was his prisoner. He displayed towards that prince all the honours due to his birth, and manifested the cordiality of an old friend. On the very night after the battle those two princes conversed familiarly, ate together, and partook of the same bed. He wrote to the court, exacting nothing for himself; but, among other rewards, of which he pretended to be the distributor, he claimed the blank brevet of a marshal

of France, in order to fill it up for whomsoever he should think fit. This moderation, as regards himself, cannot be praised, since Catherine could not do otherwise than expedite for him letters of general-in-chief of the king's armies.

The duke pursuing these advantages with ardour, laid siege to Orleans, the capture of which place was certain; so that the protestant faction, beaten and discouraged, was upon the point of complete ruin: it was, however, rescued by means of a crime. The duke of Guise was assassinated by a man named Poltrot de Méré, who, shortly before, had been rescued from death by his clemency. The duke had before escaped assassination at the siege of Rouen; and, when the murderer was conducted to his presence, who boasted that he had sought his life in defence of his religion: "*Learn,*" said the duke, "*which of the two religions we profess is the best; yours has prompted you to assassinate me, and mine impels me to pardon you!*" These memorable and beautiful words are thus poetized by Voltaire in his tragedy of Alzire:

Des Dieux que nous servons connois la difference:
Les tiens t'ont commandé le meurtre et la vengeance;
Et le mien, quand ton bras vient de m'assassiner,
M'ordonne de te plaindre et de te pardonner.

THUS ANGLICISED.

The diff'rence of the Gods we serve now learn:
With blood and vengeance thine will have thee burn;
And mine, when doom'd by thee no more to live,
Bids me to pity thee, and thus forgive.

The last moments of the duke of Guise were worthy his character and his life; he manifested all the firmness of the hero and the sentiments of a Christian. The murderer, during his tortures and to the last moments of suffering, uniformly charged Coligny as the instigator of the crime. Henry of Guise, son of the deceased, notwithstanding his youth, from that moment swore implacable and eternal hatred against the admiral; he made oath to avenge his father's death at some future period in the most signal manner: he too faithfully performed his promise.

The duke of Guise dead, and the prince of Condé and the constable prisoners, it became easy to bring about a general reconciliation; although the inflexible obstinacy of the admiral constantly opposed that measure. The finances were exhausted, commerce annihilated, the land untilled, and the whole realm of France presented but one frightful picture of plunder and devastation. The Calvinists had, during this war, perpetrated crimes before unknown: not content with fire and plunder, and the demolition of churches and monasteries, they combined sarcasm with profanation; they mutilated the statues of saints, committed relics to the flames, tore up the most sanctified ornaments of the altar, and applied them to ridiculous uses equally with the holy vessels; in short, they broke open and robbed the tombs of catholics, and dispersed their ashes to the winds. The opposite party, irritated by these proceedings, became in turn equally inhu-

man; and their cruelties were marked by every species of vengeance. The queen was desirous of peace, which was ratified notwithstanding the opposition of the admiral, who expressed the most lively reproaches on the subject to the prince of Condé, as well as to Calvin, Beza, and the other leading protestant ministers: but he was compelled to submit to the general feeling.

The first results of this pacification, known by the name of *The Convention of Amboise*, was the expulsion of the English, masters of the city of Havre, which had been ceded to them by the prince of Condé, as a pledge for sums of money which had been advanced. They were the remnants of the army of Condé, which the constable marched to besiege that town. The desire to efface the shame of a treaty clandestinely entered into with the enemies of the state, made these troops perform prodigies of valour; and the city, in consequence, promptly opened its gates. Immediately after, the queen, who had conducted the young king to the siege of Havre, proceeded with him to Rouen, where she caused his majority to be declared in the parliament of Normandy; Charles the Ninth being then in his fourteenth year. From early boyhood, the face and person of this monarch displayed an imposing appearance; his mind was quick, his intentions good; but he possessed at the same time an ardent and yielding temper; he displayed a love for arms, a passion for the chase, and, generally speaking, for all violent exercises. Many historians have

very improperly extolled his education. In a letter, still extant, written by Catherine, and addressed to the king her son, that princess particularly exhorts him to *mount on horseback, to hunt, to run, and to amuse himself with the lance.* It was necessary, on the contrary, to bring him to moderate that physical ardour so prominent in his character, and which might become particularly dangerous when combined with an imbecility of character. The queen, it is stated, made him acquainted with all the affairs of state, and urged him to attend the council; but what a school was advice of this nature! what a study for a youthful prince was such fallacious and timid policy, without any extended views, as divested of genius as of loyalty, sacrificing every consideration to escape temporary embarrassments, and indulging every passion for the sake of aggrandizement! by turns cowardly and perfidious, governed by fear or by ambition, preparing for the future insurmountable obstacles, with inevitable shame, and through artifice and bad faith, impeding a happy termination to those state intricacies, by ratifying a sincere reconciliation and a solid treaty of peace!

Catherine, in nominating directors for her son, only sought men subservient to her will; and admonished them, above all, to inculcate in the mind of the young monarch an implicit and blind submission to her decrees. The dawning youth of Charles was surrendered up to flatterers and

vicious courtiers, whose example and culpable adulation finished by bewildering his reason and corrupting his heart.

In 1565 the suspicions of the protestants, fomented by the intrigues of admiral Coligny, produced the second civil war. The prince of Condé and the admiral hazarded an attempt to carry off the king, who was then at Monceaux; but the valour and fidelity of the Swiss guards caused the plot to fail. This event was followed by the battle of Saint Denis; previous to which the king sent a herald into that town, then in possession of the rebels, bearing an order from the monarch that contained the alternative, either to lay down their arms or to declare that they confirmed a renewal of their revolt. The prince of Condé, seeing the messenger approach bearing a paper in his hand, exclaimed in an imperious and angry tone, "*Take heed of what thou intendest to do; if thou bringest me any thing derogatory to my honour, I will cause thee to be hanged.*" "*I come,*" replied the herald, "*on the part of my master and your's, and your threats will not prevent me from obeying his orders.*" Having uttered these words, he presented the royal mandate; to which the prince made answer that he would forward his reply in three days. "*I must have it in twenty-four hours,*" resumed the herald, who then retired. The catholics gained the victory; during the action the constable displayed his accustomed talent as a general, combined with the vigour of a young man, and the courage of an

impetuous soldier; and he there received his death wound: the Calvinists rushed upon his person in order to make him prisoner; but the catholics liberated him from their hands. He expired, professing those religious sentiments he had manifested during life; but his confessor at length exhorting him too much to resign himself to death, "*Father,*" said the constable, "*it would be disgraceful, after having lived for eighty years, if I did not know how to die a quarter of an hour hence!*"

At the commencement of 1568 was concluded the peace of Longjumeau, which only lasted six months; when the third civil war broke out, which proved more disastrous than those preceding. Admiral Coligny invited to France the protestant princes of Germany, who, says Lanoue, were overjoyed at entering, and committed the most horrible excesses throughout all the countries they traversed and ravaged.

Such are the principal events which occurred in France from the period of Francis the First until the boyish years of Henry the Great. This prince descended in a direct line from Robert of France, count of Clermont, sixth son of Saint Louis, whose only portion was the comté of Clermont in Beauvoisis.

Robert married Beatrice, daughter and heiress of John of Burgundy, and of Agnes of Bourbon, whose name was adopted by Robert and his descendants.

The house of La Marche was a branch of that of Bourbon. In 1364 Jean of Bourbon, count

of Marche, espoused Catherine of Vendome, sister and sole inheritrix of the last count of that name. There were three generations from Jean of Bourbon until Charles, in whose favour Francis the First created the comté of Vendome into a duchy. Charles of Bourbon had seven children, of whom there only remained Anthony of Bourbon, who was father of Henry the Fourth; Charles of Bourbon, cardinal and archbishop of Rouen, who was afterwards called the old cardinal; and Louis prince of Condé, killed at the battle of Jarnac.

Anthony of Bourbon married Jeanne d'Albret, daughter and only heiress of Henry d'Albret, king of Navarre, and of Margaret of Valois, sister of Francis the First, so justly celebrated on account of her beauty, wit, and the protection she uniformly accorded to the learned and men of letters. The king of Navarre, having no male offspring, most ardently desired that his daughter should produce him an heir, in the hope that such child would at some future period avenge him on the Spaniards; since, under the reign of Ferdinand of Arragon, the king had been deprived of Upper Navarre, situated beyond the Pyrenees.

CHAPTER II.

Jeanne d'Albret brought to bed of Henry the Fourth.—Anecdotes of Henry d'Albret, his grandfather.—Henry's cradle.—His baptism.—Anecdotes of Henry's infancy.—Death of Henry d'Albret.—Mode adopted in the education of Henry.—Anthony of Navarre, Henry's father, killed at the siege of Rouen.—Jeanne d'Albret openly professes Calvinism.—Her character.—Henry's liberality to his tutor Florentine Christian.—Description of Henry in the Memoirs of Nevers.—His literary acquirements, &c. and knowledge of languages.—Charles the Ninth and his court visit the Southern Provinces.—Catherine de Medicis and the duke of Alva consult on the massacre of Saint Bartholomew.—Character of Henry the Fourth.—Jeanne, queen of Navarre, joins Coligny with her son and Henry prince of Condé.—Henry of Navarre named generalissimo of the Calvinist forces.—Battle of Montcontour.—Henry's wise remark.—Sanguinary conduct pursued during the wars of the League.—Successes of Admiral Coligny.—Battle of Arnay le Duc, where Henry displayed his first feat of arms.—His words upon that and other subjects.—Treaty of peace at St. Germaine en Laye.—Advantageous terms granted to the Calvinists.—Nuptials of Charles the Ninth with Elizabeth of Austria.—Death of queen Jeanne of Navarre.—Coligny invited to court.—Intrigues of Catherine de Medicis.—Curious opinion of Coligny.—Marriage of Henry the Fourth with Margaret of Valois.

It would be difficult to ascertain for a certainty the spot where the mother of Henry the Fourth proved pregnant. It is generally supposed that her conception took place at La

Fleche, in Anjou, where her father, Anthony of Bourbon, and her mother, the princess of Navarre, had resided from the end of February 1552, until the middle of May 1553. It is, however, ascertained that she first became aware of her situation, and felt the quickening of life within her, while with her husband in Picardy, of which province he was governor, and had repaired thither to assume the command of the army levied to oppose the emperor Charles the Fifth. Certainly, says Perefixe, it was but just that he who was destined by Divine Providence to become an extraordinary prince, should receive the earliest germs of existence in a camp, amidst the clangor of trumpets and the sound of cannon, like a true offspring of Mars.

Henry d'Albret, grandfather of Henry the Fourth, who was still living, having learned the pregnancy of his daughter, desired that she might be immediately removed to Navarre, in order to be near him at the time of her lying-in, wishing to superintend the first moments of the child's birth, who, he stated, as by a secret presentiment, would in process of time avenge the injuries he had sustained from the Spaniards.

This courageous princess, therefore, taking leave of her husband, left Compiegne on the 15th of November, 1553; and having traversed France as far as the Pyrenees, arrived at Pau in Bearn, the residence of her royal father; where, on the 13th of the same month, she happily brought forth a son.

Previous to this event, Henry d'Albret had made his will, which the princess, his daughter, was very anxious to peruse, because it had been told her that this testamentary paper was to her disadvantage, and in favour of a lady for whom her royal parent had entertained very tender sentiments. Jeanne, however, did not dare to breathe a word upon the subject; but her father, being made acquainted with her wish, promised to place the will in her hands as soon as she should have produced to him the fruit of her loins; but upon condition that, during the period of her labour, she would sing him a song; "*in order*," said he, "*that you do not produce me a peevish and crying child.*" The princess gave her promise; and testified so much courage, that notwithstanding the pains attendant upon her situation, she sang a song in the language of Bearn as soon as she heard the king enter her apartment. It was remarked, that in opposition to the general course of nature, the infant was born without screaming or weeping; and it might naturally be expected, says Perefixe, that a prince destined to ensure the joy and prosperity of France would not enter the world amidst cries and wailings.

Immediately after the birth of Henry, his grandfather transported the boy in the skirt of his robe to his chamber, and then presented his will, enclosed in a golden casket, to his daughter, saying, "*My daughter, there is what belongs to you;*" and then holding up the child to its mother,

he added, "*and this is mine.*" While fondling the infant, he rubbed its lips with some garlic peeling, and made it suck some drops of wine from his golden goblet, in order, as he said, to render the temperament of the babe more masculine and vigorous.

This precious child was placed in a cradle made of tortoise-shell, decorated with silver ornaments; which was preserved with scrupulous care in the castle of the city of Pau, until the period of the Revolution.

In 1793 some adherents of anarchy were desirous of destroying with every degree of *solemnity* the cradle *of the tyrant Henry the Fourth;* when baron d'Espalongue, at that time governor of the fortress, M. de Beauregard, director of the king's domains, and serjeant La Maigniere, conceived a happy expedient to frustrate the rage of these factious revolutionists. M. de Beauregard possessed, in his cabinet of natural history, the shell of a tortoise similar to that which formed the cradle of Henry; when, in concert with M. d'Espalongue, he secretly made an exchange; and the shell that had belonged to the cabinet of natural history was abandoned to the outrageous populace, and publicly burned. M. de Beauregard continued depository of the cradle, which, upon his death-bed, he confided to his son-in-law M. de Laporte, and his successor to the post of director of the domains. Letters, and a verbal process, whereto are annexed the requisite signatures, accompanied by all the

legal forms required, prove the authenticity of these statements. M. de Laporte faithfully preserved the cradle, the existence of which he never revealed until the period when such a confession might be made known without incurring danger. By this ingenious and laudable deception, all these respectable individuals exposed themselves to death; and yet the expedient was devised merely for the purpose of saving a tortoise-shell cradle! From hence we may judge what they would have been capable of undertaking for their monarch and the descendants of Henry the Great. The remembrance, however, of that great prince was ever held particularly dear to the inhabitants of Pau; and the excesses to which we have alluded were only committed by a small number of cut-throats, consisting of the very dregs of the populace, and of whom no vestige at present remains.

The Spaniards had been accustomed to say, by way of derision, when speaking of the birth of the mother of our Henry,—"*A miracle! the cow has produced a lamb;*" meaning, by the epithet cow, her mother, queen Margaret of Valois, sister of Francis the First; for such was the nick-name they gave her; while to her husband they subjoined that of the *cowherd,* in allusion to the armorial bearings of Bearn, which are two cows. King Henry, who felt an internal assurance of the future glory of his grandson, when bearing the infant in his arms, would frequently, as he kissed the child, at the same time calling to mind these

sarcasms on the part of the Spaniards, remark with an expression of joy to those who paid him complimentary visits on the birth of his grandson, "*Behold, my lamb has now brought forth a lion.*"

Henry was baptized the year following, being the festival of Twelfth-day, on the 6th of January, 1554. For this ceremony a baptismal font of silver-gilt was expressly made, from which he was christened in the chapel of the castle of Pau. His sponsors were Henry the Second, king of France; and Henry d'Albret, king of Navarre; from whom he inherited his name; while his godmother was madame Claude of France, afterwards duchess of Lorraine. Jacques de Foix, at that time bishop of Lescar, and subsequently cardinal, supported him over the baptismal font, in the names of their most Christian Majesties; and madame d'Audouins, in the name of madame Claude of France. He was baptized by cardinal d'Armagnac, bishop of Rhodez, and vice-legate of Avignon.

Great difficulty at first attended the rearing of the prince, having had seven or eight nurses in succession. On quitting the breast, the king, his grandfather, committed him to the charge of Suzanne de Bourbon, wife of Jean d'Albret, baroness of Miossens, by whom he was reared in the castle of Coaraze, in Bearn, situated in the midst of the rocks and mountains. Henri d'Albret commanded that the infant should be dressed and nourished like the other children of the country,

and that he should be accustomed to run and climb the rugged steeps.

Henry, while yet very young, took great delight in pricking his fingers and making them bleed, *to accustom himself*, as he would remark, *to combats, and become inured to the destiny that awaited him.*

He was nourished with the ordinary brown bread, beef, cheese, and garlic; and he was frequently made to walk bare-footed, and with his head uncovered. He was called, in the cradle, *prince of Viane;* and he soon after received the title of *duke of Beaumont*, and afterwards that of *prince of Navarre.* The queen, his mother, took infinite pains with his education, and for a preceptor appointed La Gaucherie, a very learned and zealous Calvinist. Having been presented, while yet a child, to Henry the Second, the monarch demanded, "*Will you be my child?*"—to which the little prince answered, in the language of Bearn, "*It is he who is my father;*" pointing to the king of Navarre. "*Well, then,*" resumed Henry, "*will you be my son-in-law?*"—"*Yes, willingly,*" said the child. From that period his marriage with Margaret of Valois was decided upon.

Henry had only attained the age of seventeen months when his grandfather, king Henry d'Albret, died at Hagetman, in Bearn, on the 25th of May, 1555, aged fifty-three. This prince was courageous, sensible, affable, and courteous to every one; and so extremely liberal, that the emperor Charles the Fifth, happening to be

journeying through Navarre, was received in such a courteous and noble manner, that he remarked, no prince had ever before greeted him with such magnificence.

By his will, he commanded that his body should be transported to Pampeluna, there to be interred with his predecessors; and that, in the interim, he should be placed in the cathedral church of Lescar, in Bearn. He also ordered that young Henry should continue to be uniformly nourished and clothed in the plainest manner; taught to ride on horseback as soon as possible; and tutored in the knowledge of handling arms with grace and agility, as well for attack as defence: and that he should be inured, betimes, to wear the breast-plate, helmet, shield, and iron accoutrements, which were then extremely heavy, as appears from the arms in which Francis the First combated being so cumbersome as to require two men to support them. In fine, it was his grandsire's will that he should be rendered accessible, affable, and popular; that playthings should not be given to him; and, above all, that the voice of flattery should never assail his ear.

To this mode of education, so uncommon among princes, Henry was indebted for a robust constitution, a frank and open character, and those manners, simple, natural, and affable, which gained him the hearts of all. During his long fatiguing rambles, he was accustomed to enter the hovels of the poor; and he familiarly conversed

with the honest mountaineers, who were enraptured on witnessing the presence of their youthful prince beneath the humble thatch.

By this means Henry acquired in detail a knowledge of the miseries of the country people, and their moments of happiness, equally as touching as their misfortunes to his sensitive soul. When we call to our recollection the little that is required to ensure the happiness of the poor, the heart swells with indignation against the barbarity that deprives them of such simple and pure felicity, acquired by so many fatiguing and useful toils! But he who is content with the bare necessaries of life, has nothing to lose. More than once Henry witnessed the imposition of a trivial tax, newly established, that destroyed the repose of a whole family, and carried sorrow and discouragement to the asylum of joy and gaiety. The prince uniformly bore in mind these early recollections, which ultimately contributed to render him the cherished idol of France and a model for royalty. From his infancy he may be said to have enjoyed the true glory of a monarch, being equally loved by the husbandman, the country people, and the nobility.

After the decease of Henry's grandfather, he was succeeded by his daughter Jeanne, and Anthony duke of Vendôme his son-in-law. When this event took place, they were at the court of France, and found much difficulty in obtaining leave of absence to repair to Bearn, owing to Henry the Second being urged by evil counsel-

lors to take possession of Lower Navarre, which was their right; alleging, that all the territories beyond the Pyrenees formed part of the realm of France. Jeanne and the duke, however, very adroitly procured the opposition of the states of that territory, and the French monarch did not dare venture to press them farther on the topic, fearful lest despair should urge them to court the aid of Spain; but he ever after continued displeased with them, to such a point, that, on giving to Anthony the government of Guienne, which had been held by Henry d'Albret, his father-in-law, he separated from it the province of Languedoc, which had been attached to it for a great length of time.

About two years afterwards they revisited the court of France, and conducted thither their son, then five years old, remarkable for his beauty and the perfect symmetry of his limbs; but they only continued there a few months, and then returned to the city of Bearn.

Shortly after, in 1559, occurred the unfortunate death of Henry the Second, engaged in tilting with the earl of Montgomery, who was succeeded by his eldest son Francis the Second; when the Guises, uncles of his wife, Mary Stuart, took possession of the government. These personages being extremely obnoxious to the princes of the blood, Louis prince of Condé, younger brother of Anthony, invited that monarch to court for the purpose of opposing their ambitious views.

During these divisions, as we have previously stated in the foregoing chapter, the Huguenots entered in the conspiracy of Amboise against the existing government; on the discovery of which the two brothers, Anthony and Louis, accused of being their leaders, were arrested at the States of Orleans; when the process of the latter was so vigorously carried on, that it was supposed he would have lost his head, had not the death of Francis the Second occurred.

Charles the Ninth succeeded; when Catherine his mother was elected regent by the states. Anthony king of Navarre, our hero's father, was appointed lieutenant-general of the kingdom of France: upon which occasion he conducted his son, the prince of Bearn, to court; (he was at that period called Henry, which name he bore until the demise of his mother, who was princess of Navarre in her own right;) the prince having then attained his tenth year. Anthony king of Navarre did not long enjoy his title of lieutenant-general of the kingdom, being wounded at the siege of Rouen, when in the act of inspecting the trenches; of which he died some days afterwards, at Andely on the Seine. Had this prince longer survived, there is little doubt but the Huguenots would have experienced the greatest reverses in France, as they were cordially hated by the population, although his brother the prince of Condé stood forth chief of their party.

Jeanne d'Albret and the prince her son were at the French court when the death of Anthony occurred; soon after which, she returned to Bearn, and openly professed the reformed religion. She had left the youthful Henry at court, under the conduct of La Gaucherie his tutor, who used every effort to instil into his mind a love for learning, not through the medium of grammatical rules, but interlocutory conversations. In this manner he accustomed his disciple to utter such noble sentiments as—

> With justice to conquer, or gloriously die.

And again—

> Kings o'er their people usurp sov'reign sway;
> But God, more puissant, makes monarchs obey.

On the death of La Gaucherie, which shortly after occurred, the queen of Navarre recalled her son from court to the city of Bearn, where she then proclaimed herself the protectress of the Calvinist party. She was a princess of great courage, possessing an elevated soul, abounding with good sense, and that natural flow of expression which is frequently denominated in potentates the gift of elocution; a natural disposition very rarely brought to perfection in princes, because it is extremely difficult to acquire a talent that is preeminently superior, when it has never been subjected to frank and candid censure. Jeanne d'Albret, flattered by unqualified eulogiums on her elo-

quence, was desirous of shining as a disputant upon the reigning topics that agitated the public feeling. She had many conferences with leading protestant ministers; she entered upon discussions which were not perhaps, strictly speaking, consonant with her rank nor her sex; and, from adopting this conduct, she became more passionately attached to protestantism. These disputes, however, did not prevent the princess from protecting and cultivating letters. Among others, the following impromptu is said to have been uttered by Jeanne d'Albret, when in the printing-office of the justly celebrated typographer Robert Stephens:

Art singulier ! d'ici aux derniers ans
Représentez aux enfans de ma race
Que j'ai suivi des craignans Dieu la trace,
Afin qu'ils soient les mêmes pas suivans.

FREE TRANSLATION.

Transcendant art ! to time's last stretch record,
Teaching the future offspring of my race,
I trod the path of those who fear the Lord,
That they, not treading it, might share his grace.

Florentine Christian, a most zealous protestant, was the individual selected by the queen of Navarre to undertake the important task of educating the youthful prince. This scientific man was of a noble Orleanese family, and one of the most learned scholars of his age. We have from his pen a translation of Oppian, and some of the comedies of Aristophanes. In the

sequel, Florentine Christian, during the war, fled for refuge to Vendôme under the safeguard of his *élève*, who serving him after his own taste, confided to him the care of the library which the progenitors of the Bourbon family had established in that city, being one of their chief appendages. This town, however, surrendering to the forces of the League, Florentine was made prisoner; when, says De Thou, *his illustrious and munificent disciple soon accomplished his freedom by paying most liberally for his ransom.*

Under this tutor, Henry, according to the directions of his mother, was educated in the protestant persuasion; and he imbibed excellent principles from studying the Evangelists. Florentine, above all, infused into the mind of his pupil a spirit of perseverance in all his undertakings, and Christian resignation when inevitable disgraces should occur. In the Memoirs of Nevers, we find several letters written in 1567 by the principal magistrates of Bourdeaux, which contain most interesting details on the subject of the youthful Henry. We insert the following passages for the entertainment of the reader:—

"The prince of Bearn is a resident among us; and it must be confessed he is a charming creature. At the age of thirteen he possesses all the qualifications of eighteen or nineteen. He is agreeable, civil, and obliging. He lives with every body in so familiar a manner, that

wheresoever he appears, crowds surround him; he conducts himself so nobly in every action, that it is at once apparent he is a great prince. His physiognomy is well formed: his nose is neither too large nor too small; in his eyes, a soft expression beams; his complexion is brown, but very regular; and the whole is animated by such an agreeable vivacity, that if he does not make his way well with the ladies, it will be very unfortunate."

The means adopted by Florentine could not fail to invigorate the soul and character of young Henry, as if this sage director had had a foreknowledge of the obstacles, the contrarieties, and the reverses ordained him by fortune. In his early youth Henry translated Cæsar's Commentaries; and Casaubon attests having seen the manuscript entire, in the handwriting of the prince. He would frequently exclaim with Virgil,

Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.

Pardon the vanquish'd, and subdue the proud.

For his device he took the figure of Hercules, to which he subjoined the following motto:

Invia virtuti nulla est via.

Alluding to Henry, the renowned Scaliger says, "*It was essential not to speak bad Latin before the king, as he immediately perceived it.*" He never forgot the Latin and French moral dis-

tiches he had learned by heart; to which he ultimately subjoined this line and a half from Malherbe, which he very justly esteemed one of the best maxims that could be selected for the guidance of an energetic and Christian soul:

> " Vouloir ce que Dieu veut est la seule science
> Qui nous mette en repos."
>
> To will that which God wills, is the only science capable of ensuring us repose.

He was master of the Spanish and Italian languages, and was initiated betimes to a complete knowledge of the history of France. From his earliest infancy he became enthusiastic in perusing the virtues and exploits of Bayard, whom he regarded as the model of French chivalry. Among the writers of antiquity he was most attached to the works of Plutarch. He was frequently heard to say, after having ascended the throne, *that he owed that writer the greatest obligations; that he had from thence extracted the most excellent maxims for his conduct and his government.* According to the remark of a modern writer,* a bad prince will never take delight in the perusal of Plutarch, as every eulogium would become a satire, and every maxim the source of his condemnation.

Henry was only twelve years of age when Charles the Ninth, accompanied by Catherine de Medicis and the major part of the court, paid a

* See the work of Abbé Brissard entitled " *Of the Love of Henry the Fourth for Letters.*"

visit to all the southern provinces, under pretext of proceeding to Bayonne, where he was to meet his sister Elizabeth, who had espoused Philip the Second of Spain. Jeanne d'Albret and the young Prince of Bearn were compelled to accompany the king to Bayonne; when every endeavour was resorted to for the purpose of diverting the mind of Elizabeth from a secret chagrin that preyed upon her spirits. That unfortunate princess, whose youth had been enveloped in a veil of mystery and darkness which concealed so many bitter pains and sinister fears, was overjoyed on finding herself in the bosom of her family, and a splendid court anxious to afford her every pleasure. Charles the Ninth gave balls, festivities, and tournaments. The prince of Bearn was distinguished above all the rest; who, notwithstanding his tender age, drew down upon himself the general regard, and obtained the suffrages of all. Catherine de Medicis was particularly fond of him: she was never satisfied unless he was near her person; on account, as she would remark, *of his grace and peculiar gentility;* for frankness always possesses an attraction with those practised in artifice: they discover in it so much originality, and an imprudence which they hope to turn to good account.

Several historians, and among the rest d'Aubigné, Mathieu, and Anquetil, author of the Spirit of the League, pretend, that in the midst of these festivities at Bayonne, Catherine, and Ferdinand Alvares duke of Alva, minister of

Philip the Second, meditated the massacre of Saint Bartholomew. It was stated, that from some expressions collected from the youthful prince of Bearn, the conversations of the queen and the duke of Alva were always directed to the necessity that existed of destroying the Calvinist faction. It is added, that Catherine expressing herself adverse to the sacrifice of the protestant leaders, the duke made answer, *that ten thousand frogs were not worth the head of one salmon.* Since it is affirmed that the queen adopted all the political views of the duke of Alva, it is difficult to draw a conclusion, from the above words, that the project was an assassination of the whole body of Calvinists. It seems, on the contrary, from the expressions used by the duke, that it was his opinion one man alone should be sacrificed; namely, admiral Coligny. It is, however, by no means proved that Henry ever repeated, or that he had ever heard those words. Sully does not make mention of the anecdote; and it is scarcely credible that Catherine and the duke of Alva would have projected a similar plot in presence of the young prince of Bearn, publicly brought up in the tenets of the reformed religion, and the son of a princess of whom the queen was extremely suspicious. In addition to this, we do not find that similar deeds of sanguinary atrocity are meditated upon for seven years. Every thing becomes tumultuary in the execution of a crime so heinous; and we shall in the sequel endeavour to substantiate

from facts that this massacre, which had its origin in terror, was not premeditated for any considerable length of time, nor entered upon from any organized plan previously fixed. It is true, this journey infused in the mind of Charles the Ninth the seeds of hatred and resentment. Upon the roads which he travelled, he beheld in every direction the traces of those ravages, the fruits of civil discord: he contemplated with indignation the devastated monasteries, ruined churches, crosses beaten down, the mutilated statues of saints, desolate cottages, fields strewed with human bones disinterred from their cemeteries, and whole towns in a dismantled condition: such were the scenes that might have operated upon a mind more strong by nature, and not corrupted, as was that of the monarch, by a pernicious education, and religious tenets that were impregnated with bigotry and unrelenting intolerance.

Henry continued under the direction of his mother and preceptors until the age of sixteen; and as it may now be necessary to delineate his character as traced by historians, we will commence with that of his bosom friend and minister, the famous Sully.

"Nature," says that writer, "had been prodigal of every favour to this prince which he could have hoped for, excepting that of a death so tragic and undeserved. He was of good stature, his body and members formed in all those proportions which not only constitute what

is termed a well-made man, but nervous, agile, vigorous, and healthy. His general appearance was animated; the features of his countenance lively and agreeable, which rendered his physiognomy most prepossessing. In addition to this, his manners were so familiar and engaging, that even when he sometimes assumed the dignified air of majesty, it never wholly obliterated that generous affability which had been implanted in him by nature. He was from his birth generous, frank, sensible, and commiserating. For his subjects he felt all the tenderness of a mother, and for the state the attachment of the father of a family. This gracious disposition uniformly led him back even from the vortex of pleasures, to dwell upon the project of rendering his people happy and his kingdom flourishing. Thence arose that flow of imagination and ardent desire to render perfect a multiplicity of useful regulations.

"It would be difficult to point out a single branch of administration, or even a rank or a profession, to which his reflections were not directed. His desire was, as he would frequently state, that glory might dispose of the last years of his existence, rendering them at the same time agreeable to God and of utility to the human race. The idea of the grand and the beautiful was inherently implanted in his mind; which led him to contemplate adversity as a mere transient impediment. Time was the only thing wanting to conduct his useful projects to their destined

accomplishment. Order and economy were virtues implanted in him from childhood, and cost him nothing to put into action. Never was a monarch more capable of governing without ministers than Henry the Fourth: the minutiæ of state affairs were for him no labour, but an amusement. Princes who are desirous of occupying themselves with the government of their states, frequently find themselves incapable either of condescending to examine the detail of affairs, or to elevate their ideas to objects of importance. But the mind of this prince knew how to appreciate every thing. His various letters are so many incontestable proofs on this head; and the custom then licensed of addressing the king directly in the most simple terms, renders this statement the more evident. Henry, from reflecting on the danger of indulging ungovernable passion, having encountered a long train of adversity, aware of the necessity of securing partisans, and, in short, from the impulse of a heart prone to tenderness, had changed the early impetuosity of his boisterous passions into the mere emotions of petulance, which was apparent on his features, his gesticulations, but very rarely in his words. Notwithstanding the grave exterior which the rank of majesty seems necessarily to impose, he freely gave himself up to that tender, delightful joy, which an equality of stations entails on general society. The truly great man knows how to associate himself with the pleasures of private life; he

loses nothing by thus placing himself on a level with the simple individual, provided that, when out of the sphere, he shows himself equally capable of fulfilling the duties of his rank; — but the courtier always calls to recollection that he is in the presence of his master.

"After having extolled this prince for an infinity of truly estimable qualifications, we must not hide from ourselves those defects that tended to obscure them.

"I should conceive," adds Sully, "I had only half laboured for the instruction of mankind, and, above all, for that of princes,—the principal object I had in view being to afford satisfaction to both,—did I retrench a single feature from the present delineation. I am desirous of laying open to their view that heart where so much grandeur was combined with such a portion of weakness, in order that the one may acquire experience from the other, and that they may be the more on their guard against a dangerous passion, which may give birth to a thousand disgraceful emotions, of which they would not have imagined themselves capable. Timidity, indecision, meanness, jealousy, fury — nay, even duplicity and falsehood; — yes, falsehood and duplicity—Henry, that being so noble, so frank, became susceptible of those passions as soon as he surrendered himself up the slave of love. I have very frequently observed," continues Sully, "that he deceived me

by pretended confidences, when there was nothing that compelled him to utter truths; that he pretended to be impressed with a sense of reason and sound resolutions which his heart all the time disavowed: in short, that he went so far as to declare himself ashamed of his chains, while he internally proffered his oaths never to break them, and that he was rendering the knot more indissoluble. His attachment for play, his passion for women, his yielding temper, frequently converting his actions to weakness, and his predilection for a variety of pleasures, made him guilty of faults, dissipate his time, and hurried him into effeminate expenses. But, to give this monarch his due, both sides being considered, it must be confessed, that his enemies have greatly exaggerated his defects. We will allow that Henry was the slave of women; but they never tended to bias him in the choice of his ministers, the destiny of his attendants, or the deliberations of his council. His other faults may equally be attributed to natural weaknesses. It is sufficient that we examine what he has done, to allow that in him there was no parallel as to good and evil: and since honour and glory were always sufficiently powerful to snatch him from pleasure, it is but justice to regard them as his great and ruling passions."

M. de Bury, in his History of Henry the Fourth, 1767, vol. i. p. 2, thus expresses himself:—"The glory of this prince was far more

brilliant and estimable than that of Philip, Alexander, or Cæsar. His virtues were without any alloy of vice, although he possessed a few of those faults which are inseparable from human nature. His sole ambition consisted in being looked upon as the father of his people, and to ensure their felicity. He only waged war to extinguish those civil dissensions which desolated the kingdom, to acquire possession of the crown which belonged to him of right from his birth, and to accomplish the peace of the nations of Europe, without subjecting them to his dominion.

"His courage was almost beyond the stretch of humanity: no warrior was ever more frequently exposed to imminent dangers, nor did any one ever extricate himself with more glory. He was firm in adversity, moderate in success, persevering in opposing obstacles, intrepid amidst perils, expert in acting, prompt in execution, and prudent when it was necessary to act with precaution: his policy, directed by justice and probity, never had recourse to those byways and deceptions which the system of Machiavel had introduced in the ratification of treaties: finally, the difference that existed between the clemency of Henry and that of Cæsar was, that the latter had for its end to make the Romans forget his usurpation, and the loss of so many illustrious citizens sacrificed to his ambition; while that of Henry emanated from his

heart, and had no other object in view but the fervent love of his people.

"He liquidated the enormous debts which he had been compelled to contract; he put a stop to the enterprizes of religious enthusiasts; he established that harmony and unanimity in every department of the state, which constitute its most durable basis, and which had been destroyed by ambition and religious dissensions. Under the reign of this prince, commerce began to flourish: his designs and projects were conceived with such consummate wisdom, and executed with so much combined prudence and firmness—he established such regularity throughout the various departments of administration—that, notwithstanding his sudden and untimely death, the weakness of a stormy regency, during which measures very adverse to his views were entered upon, the kingdom nevertheless maintained that flourishing position to which it had been brought by his wise policy. Richelieu then figured on the scene; who, guided by the sage maxims and principles of Henry, made good the disorders which the minority of Louis the Thirteenth had produced. Lastly came Louis the Fourteenth; who, combining with the great qualities wherewith nature had gifted him the example of his grandfather, raised the kingdom of France to that pinnacle of power and glory which rendered it the admiration of all Europe. From hence it may be truly affirmed,

that to Henry the Fourth was due that happy and brilliant change which the nation has experienced until the present period."

We will conclude with the following short extract from a modern writer, who delineates the characteristics of Henry the Great in the manner following:—

"The stature of Henry was at the same time majestic and light; he combined with agility a physical force, surpassing that of all the young persons of his age in the chase and other bodily exercises: he particularly distinguished himself in the noble diversion of tournaments, which at that period constituted the delight of the French nobility. In those pastimes he displayed an intrepid courage and chivalric generosity, which ultimately rendered him the most renowned warrior of Europe. His features were regular, and his countenance abounded with sweetness, sagacity, and every generous sentiment, being the characteristic feelings of his soul:—once seen, he was never to be forgotten. His physiognomy, so cherished and revered, has become equally popular with the life of that hero: the lapse of more than two centuries has not been sufficient to efface the recollection; every Frenchman is acquainted with the traits of Henry the Great, as well as with his manners and his accent; it appears as if he had been heard to converse, that he had been a thousand times present, and that the existing generation had lived in habits of intimacy with him."—*Madame Genlis*, vol. i. p. 46.

During the first civil war, on the subject of religion, Francis duke of Guise, as we have previously observed, was assassinated by Poltrot at the siege of Orleans, leaving his offspring minors: this event occurred in 1563. In the second commotion, the constable Montmorency received a wound at the battle of St. Denis, of which he died at Paris three days after, on the eve of St. Martin in the year 1567; and in the third civil war of 1569, Jeanne d'Albret proclaimed herself the advocate of the Huguenot party.

At the battle of Jarnac the prince of Condé was killed, or rather assassinated in cold blood after the affray, during which his leg had been broken.

The reformers were in a great measure indebted for their resources to the firmness of Jeanne d'Albret, queen of Navarre. She quitted La Rochelle, and repaired with all expedition to Cognac, a town of Angoumois; at which place were assembled admiral Andelot, with the other captains, and the remnants of their army. Thither she escorted the prince of Bearn her son, aged sixteen, and the eldest son of the prince of Condé, some years younger. Jeanne, holding the two lads by their hands, advanced in front of the soldiers, and thus addressed them:—"My friends, we weep the loss of a prince (the prince of Condé) who, until the period of his death, supported with as much fidelity as courage the party which he had

undertaken to defend; but our tears would not prove worthy of him, if, following his example, we did not adopt a firm resolution to offer ourselves as sacrifices for our faith. The good cause is not extinguished with Condé; and his misfortune should not plunge men into despair, who are attached to their religion. God watches over those who are with Him. He had given the prince companions calculated to second him during his life, and He still leaves us brave captains, capable of repairing the injury we have sustained by his loss. I offer you my son, the young prince of Bearn; I confide to you Henry, son of the prince who excites our regrets. Heaven grant that they may both prove themselves worthy inheritors of the valour of their ancestors, and that the sight of these tender pledges may unceasingly urge you to continue united, for the maintenance of the cause you defend!"

The loudest acclamations were heard throughout the army, which were only interrupted by the prince of Bearn, who, advancing with a warlike demeanour, said, "*I swear to defend our religion, and to persevere in the common cause, until either death or victory shall have restored to us that liberty of conscience which we desire.*" The young prince of Condé displayed, by his actions, that he participated in the sentiments of Henry; and immediately after the prince of Bearn was proclaimed generalissimo.

In this quality he was declared chief of the party, and admiral Coligny invested with com-

mand under him. The latter was a very great captain, but committed gross errors: and the prince, although so young, had already sufficient sense to remark his faults; for he very justly observed, at the grand skirmish of Loudun, that if the duke of Anjou, afterwards Henry the Third of France, had been furnished with troops for the attack, he would have joined the combat; and that, by not doing so, he was reduced to a desperate situation, and by this means the enemy acquired sufficient time for the arrival of the residue of his forces.

All the authority and hope of the Calvinist party remained with admiral Coligny; who, says Perefixe, to speak truly, was the greatest man of that period, his religion excepted, and at the same time the most unfortunate.

The admiral, having assembled fresh forces, hazarded a second battle at Montcontour in Poitou. In this encounter, the young king of Navarre, and the youthful prince of Condé, named also Henry, were both placed under the direction of Ludovic of Nassau, who kept them stationed on a hill at a short distance, and guarded by four thousand horse.

Young Henry burned with desire to come to action; but this was not permitted, owing to apprehensions being entertained for the safety of his person. It was, no doubt, a wise expedient thus to repress his ardour; nevertheless, when the van-guard of the duke of Anjou, was forced by that of the admiral, there could have been

no danger in permitting him to bear down upon the battle, which was then in favour of Coligny. Henry was, however, prevented; upon which occasion he exclaimed, "*We lose the advantage gained, and consequently the battle.*" This happened as the prince had predicted; and from that moment it was conceived that a youth of sixteen had more acumen than experienced commanders. It is no less certain that he applied himself to the utmost of his ability in perfecting every thing he undertook; for the accomplishment of which, not only were corporeal efforts resorted to, but the united energies of an acute mind and a solidity of judgment.

After the battle of Montcontour, it was allowed by all the protestant generals, that if the body of cavalry commanded by the prince of Navarre had been suffered to engage, the catholic forces must have been beaten. One half-hour decided the fate of the Calvinist party: they feebly sustained the first shock, and at the second charge fled, when it became no longer a combat, but a massacre. The admiral in this affair had his under jaw fractured by a pistol-ball, which did not however prevent him from fighting, and issuing his orders with all the presence of mind of a consummate captain, and the activity of an intrepid soldier. In the midst of the complete rout of the Calvinists, the catholics excited each other to give no quarter, crying out, "*La Roche la belle;*" a terrible exclamation, that foreboded vengeance, as it was the name of a combat in which, a short time

previous, the Calvinists had massacred all their captives in the most inhuman manner. The field of battle, the standards, the cannon, and the baggage—every thing remained in possession of the catholics; entire regiments were put to the sword, although they threw down their arms, and supplicated for quarter. It was thus a resentment too well founded, and the most sanguinary vengeance, already prepared the massacre of Saint Bartholomew. The protestant army, consisting of twenty-five thousand men, was reduced to five or six; yet the loss of this battle was not so disastrous to the Calvinist party as might have been expected, since the catholics did not profit by the victory. The greatest advantage attending success consists in the feeling of discouragement and dismay which it creates in an enemy. If this first impulse of terror is suffered to transpire, the opponent perceives in that *nonchalance* a deficiency of acumen which restores his courage, and instils into his mind a desire for vengeance. The admiral was not pursued; he acquired sufficient time to collect the remains of his army, and to effect his retreat in good order. He conducted the two young princes with him, and had the boldness to traverse the whole French territory in order to form a junction with the German bands, which had been invited to support the protestant cause.

In the course of this retreat the admiral led his troops into Guienne, and from thence to Languedoc; where he took Nîmes by stratagem,

forced some inconsiderable places, and burnt the environs of Toulouse, so that the embers of this ravaging conflagration found their way into that great city. The war being equally kindled in the Vivarais, he showed himself on the banks of the Rhone at the head of his troops, carried the towns of Saint Julien and Saint Just, by assault, and obliged Saint Etienne in Forez to capitulate. From thence he descended by the banks of the Saône into the heart of Burgundy. Paris trembled a second time at the approach of an army, so much the more formidable, as it appeared to have acquired reinforcements by the loss of two battles; added to which, marshal Cossé, who had advanced with a body of troops, to oppose the junction of admiral Coligny and the German forces, was beaten at Arnay le Duc, and driven back; when the admiral effected a junction with his allies, and, encouraged by such a reinforcement, proceeded to carry on the war in various other provinces.

It was at the above encounter that the young prince of Navarre engaged in combat for the first time; and according to Mathieu the historian, he heard Henry thus express himself, "It was still necessary that I should retreat upwards of forty leagues, and I was continually at the discretion of the peasants. When I fought, it was equally at the risk of being taken or killed, because I had no cannon, and the king's forces were provided with artillery. Ten paces from me a horseman was struck dead by the discharge from

a culverin; but recommending the success of the day to the Almighty, the result proved auspicious." Some time previous to the battle of Arnay le Duc, Lamothe Fenelon, addressing the young prince, affected to feel astonishment that he, at so young an age, should take part in a war which, properly speaking, only regarded his uncle, the prince of Condé, and the Huguenots, who carried on hostilities against the king. "It is," answered the youthful Henry, "merely under pretext of a rebellion, falsely imputed to the prince my uncle and the Huguenots, that the enemy proposes nothing less than the extermination of the whole race of the Bourbons: we are desirous of dying all together, to obviate the expense of mourning, which we should otherwise be compelled to adopt for one another."

The same Lamothe Fenelon, having expressed to Henry how much he deplored the misfortunes with which the fire of civil war was going to *inundate* the kingdom, "*Good*," answered the king; "*it is a fire which must be extinguished with a bucket of water*."—"How so?" said Fenelon.—"*By making the cardinal of Lorraine drink of the same until he bursts—he who is the real firebrand of France.*" The admiral was too expert a soldier not to have discovered in the youth those talents which were to illustrate his name at a future period: that affability, at the same time noble, frank, and familiar, which in generals and in princes gains the hearts of warriors; that vivacity which skil-

fully knows how to profit from the fault of an enemy, or at the same time repairs its own; that patience which knows when it is necessary to wait or defer; that rapid and comprehensive glance, which appears to increase the forces of him who possesses it, by affording him a facility of commanding when he is not personally present, with as much success as if he were on the scene of action: in short, that union of varied and sometimes opposite qualities, all of which are essentially necessary to constitute a great captain.

Admiral Coligny was fully aware, says Sully, that Henry would be of greater utility to his party, from his character and talents, than on account of his rank and birth. He was, therefore, his constant companion; the prince being present at encampments, marches, retreats, and all the evolutions performed by the army. Upon these occasions the admiral uniformly demanded young Henry's opinions, which he either approved or combated, while giving him instructions on the principles and rules of the military art. Animated by ambition, but guided by Providence, the admiral thus expiated, through the medium of the prince of Bearn, all the evils which he had entailed upon the country, by forming the character of the hero who was to add so much splendour and glory to the annals of France, and to ensure for himself so much prosperity.

Admiral Coligny was preparing for a third

battle, when the king's council, fearful of the result, judged it expedient to patch up a peace with the adverse party. This treaty was ratified at Saint Germain en Laye, through the intervention of Baron de Biron, both armies being in sight of each other in the valley of Aillan, not far from Arnay le Duc: historians, however, disagree as to the date, some stating that it took place on the 11th, and others on the 15th August, 1570.

The young prince Henry, after a campaign as fatiguing as it had been perilous, and which had lasted fifteen months, retired to Rochelle. There is, however, no permanent peace when the cessation of hostilities originates only in the lassitude of either party, and that the period of warfare has been marked by cruelty and blood. Under these circumstances, the most advantageous conditions become liable to suspicion; they do not dispel hatred, and they tend to increase mistrust.

Besides a general armistice and the free exercise of the reformed religion, (except at court,) the restitution of confiscated property, and many other advantages were granted to the Calvinists; in addition to which *four cities, as sureties,* were ceded to them; that is to say, towns wherein they had a right to place governors and garrisons under their own control. They selected for this purpose La Rochelle, Montauban, Cognac, and La Charité. It was only exacted that the princes of Bearn and Condé, and twenty of the

leading chiefs of their party, should make oath to surrender them up in two years. This humiliating conduct inflicted a dreadful blow on the royal authority, and strengthened in a most dangerous manner the party it was intended to crush. Had not the treaty been broken, the holding of those four cities for two years would have sufficed for the Calvinists to establish their doctrines and the republican sentiments in the most permanent manner: besides, these conditions, so disgraceful to the court, tarnished the lustre obtained by the preceding victories of the catholic army; for we only form an opinion of the glory of military campaigns by the treaties of peace which they ultimately produce. The Calvinist faction in the eyes of France appeared triumphant. The princes, the admiral, and the other captains, retired to La Rochelle, where they took up their residence, in order to be near the court of Jeanne queen of Navarre.

The major part of the reformers only regarded, in the unexpected advantages of this treaty, the secret intention of breaking it upon the first favourable occasion. It has, however, been stated that the admiral did not participate in such a mistrustful feeling; and his self-security in this respect was honourable to his character. He, however, did not repair to court, but continued at La Rochelle, where he occupied himself in strengthening his party.

At this period Charles the Ninth married Elizabeth of Austria, daughter of the emperor

Maximilian the Second. She was an interesting and virtuous princess, who, while an occupant of the throne, experienced only terror, shame, and anguish. The preparatives for these nuptials seemed to precede every other consideration, and nothing occupied the public mind but festivities and rejoicings. The king, however, fully convinced that he should never be able to subdue the Huguenots by force, resolved to have recourse to other means, more easy, but far more wicked. He began by caressing the protestants, feigning that his wish was to take them into favour, to accede to the major part of their stipulations, and to allure them with the hope of a declaration of war against Spain in the Low Countries, on which they were passionately bent; and in order the better to succeed, Charles promised, as a guarantee of his good faith, that his sister Margaret should espouse the prince of Navarre, which had been previously promised by Henry the Second during his infancy; so that, by this means, he brought over to his side the principal Calvinists who were then residents in Paris.

After the marriage of Charles, he occupied himself with the nuptials of his sister; a union greatly desired by the court, notwithstanding the difference of religious sentiments, as it tended to dissipate mistrust, and gave assurance to public opinion. Notwithstanding this, however, it appears that serious plots were then forming against the Calvinists: yet, from all that has been stated, it is imagined the destruction only of the leaders

of that party was intended; and that the king was originally persuaded that the life of admiral Coligny would be spared; whom Charles still revered, because his youthful mind was dazzled by his warlike qualifications and the *éclat* of his reputation.

Jeanne, queen of Navarre, who had quitted Bearn to be present at the nuptials of her son, arrived at court in the middle of May, and died on the 9th of June following. She was a princess gifted with sound sense, a courage far above her sex, and a soul superior to the weaknesses and defects that characterize the generality of women, but a most implacable enemy of the catholic religion. The protestants accused the papists of having accelerated the death of this princess by means of a pair of poisoned gloves, because it was feared that her penetrating genius would have developed the designs then on foot of massacring the Calvinists. It does not, however, appear that there was much foundation for this report, which was only disseminated after the tragedy of Saint Bartholomew. At such a period, indeed, every thing was to be apprehended, and all the calumnies of vengeance were eagerly attended to; such being the result, and one of the punishments attendant on a crime of great enormity.

Le Grain states, that the queen of Navarre died in consequence of a pleurisy, *from having heated herself too much in making preparations for the marriage of her son.* This opinion is accredited

also by the impartial Perefixe. De Thou and other historians state that the doctors ascertained her death to have been the effect of an internal abscess; and some other Memoirs state that the princess had long been persuaded she had something extraordinary in her head, and that, in effect, the cause of her decease was there discovered. The leaden coffin of Jeanne d'Albret, enclosing her mortal remains, was placed in the vault of the collegiate church of Saint George at Vendôme, beside that of Anthony de Bourbon, king of Navarre, her husband. The latter was a catholic: but, after his death, Jeanne d'Albret, as we have before remarked, openly professed the Calvinist persuasion; notwithstanding which, the priests without difficulty admitted her body into their church. The tomb of this magnanimous female continued uniformly respected until the year 1793; at which period the sanctuary was profaned, pillaged, and the vaults broken up; the coffin demolished, and the ashes committed to the winds! The church is at the present period in such a ruinous state, that it would be difficult to point out the spot where the remains of Jeanne were deposited.

At the period of his mother's demise, Henry, who was proceeding to join her, learned the melancholy tidings in Poitou; upon which he assumed the title of king of Navarre.

Among other protestant lords who had been summoned to Paris, to witness the nuptials of Henry, was admiral Coligny, who repaired thither with

the rest of the leaders; when Charles the Ninth and Catherine were prodigal of their assurances of unbounded confidence and friendship. The admiral was consulted upon the project of the imaginary attack upon the Low Countries, and was led to believe that there was no other man than himself who could assume the command of the army with a prospect of success; the court extolled his valour and capacity as a military commander, and he was admitted to partake in all the councils. The king, in acting thus, did not as yet violate good faith, but the admiral could give the queen mother no credit for similar sentiments; he placed no reliance on her sincerity, conceiving her conduct merely the result of underhand policy. The friendly overtures of Charles, however, tended to blind Coligny's better sense, and lull him into that state of security which proved his perdition. A common error with all men of superior and acknowledged merit, is the indulgence of an idea that in stormy periods their talents can obliterate the remembrance of the various causes for hatred and resentment: they are in error, as it is very rarely that personal passion does not acquire an ascendency over policy and the interests of the state.

After having so frequently carried arms against his sovereign, after witnessing such carnage, and been instrumental in all those disasters wherewith France was afflicted, the admiral should not have hoped for pardon. So far, however, was this from being the fact, that he

remained the only one of his party, without entertaining disquietude or suspicion, in the midst of a court known for its consummate duplicity, fully persuaded that the absolute necessity there was for such a man as himself, would dissipate every project of vengeance, except, perhaps, in the heart of his mortal enemy the duke of Guise, who, as we have before said, had sworn aloud to avenge the death of his father.

While the court appeared to be solely occupied with the brilliant festivities and preparations for the marriage of the king of Navarre, Catherine meditated, in secret, the destruction of all the Calvinist leaders. The blackest perfidies are planned by those sovereigns who unite weakness with implacable resentments: their hatred still increases by the constraint they are under of dissimulating, and the shame of not being able to punish legitimately; while to the meanness of adopting feigned clemency always succeeds the most atrocious vengeance.

It is beyond a doubt that many events contributed to increase the resentments of the queen mother. For a considerable time libels had been industriously disseminated respecting her, while assassination was held forth as praiseworthy should it be directed against her person; added to which, she was in the constant habit of receiving anonymous letters of the most menacing tenor. One day, on leaving her apartment to attend the celebration of mass, she struck a letter with her foot, which, upon perusal, was found to state, that

unless she guaranteed to the Calvinists for ever the free exercise of their religion, she should be treated in a similar manner to the duke of Guise and the president Minard, who had both been assassinated. The reformers also promulgated the most imprudent doctrines: they recalled to the public mind every culpable action, and vilified the catholic proceedings without any adherence to candour. The intrepid and experienced Lanoue disapproved of these bravadoes: he uttered his reproaches upon the subject to Téligny, the admiral's son-in-law, and all the young men of his party; he called them *real fools and mal-adroits.* Nothing, however, could repress the boiling temperament of those young seditious warriors, who displayed as much distrust as audacity, attributing the conduct of the court only to fear and dissimulation, and loudly reprehending the self-security indulged by the admiral. A gentleman named Langoiran waited upon Coligny, and demanded his discharge. "And why?" enquired the admiral.—"*Because you are too much caressed, and I prefer escaping with fools rather than perishing with the wise,*" replied Langoiran. Nothing, however, could open the eyes of Coligny. It was certainly impossible to foresee what was to happen: even those who meditated the direst vengeance were not as yet acquainted with the extent of the intended slaughter, and all those who became accomplices were wholly ignorant upon the subject. Coligny, however,

should have entertained apprehensions for his liberty. His security was not to be shaken; all his ideas centred in the supposed war against Spain, and the certainty of being appointed general-in-chief of that great enterprize. There is not a doubt but Charles sincerely wished for war: this unfortunate monarch, very justly stigmatized in the page of history, was fond of glory: he was anxious to perform this campaign under the eyes of Coligny; but the queen mother, and her adored son the duke of Anjou, were secretly determined to oppose every impediment in their power. Catherine was well aware, that if the king, full of ardour and courage, and guided by so great a general, should be crowned with success in the expedition, the admiral, whom he admired and loved, would assume over him unbounded sway; and that, in such case, she would be deprived of all the power she then possessed. But, according to custom, dissimulating her fears and designs, she only advised the monarch to consult his council, all the members of which were devoted to her interest. Marshal de Tavannes, in conjunction with the queen, proposed that all the opinions should be communicated in writing; thus affording Catherine the means of considering them at leisure, in order to oppose or support them when alone with the king. Duplessis Mornay and Coligny strongly advocated the war; and in a document of the admiral's, which is transmitted to us by Papeliniere, book ii. vol. 27,

there is a very remarkable phrase. Speaking of the soldiery, whose state of inactivity might become dangerous, Coligny thus expresses himself: "*To empty so much corrupt and superfluous blood, which might create some new disease in the body of your state, Sire, it is necessary either to bleed, or at least to breathe the vein.*"

It is not impossible but this false reasoning may have strengthened the mind of Catherine on the subject of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, and perhaps afforded an argument in the decision of her conduct.

Shortly after the arrival of the king of Navarre at Paris, his melancholy nuptials with princess Margaret of Valois, sister of Charles the Ninth, were solemnized with a pomp truly royal, having been preceded by those of the prince of Condé and Mary of Cleves; which event occurred on the 19th of August, 1572. On this occasion both parties were betrothed at the Louvre, by the cardinal de Bourbon, and married on the ensuing day by that dignitary, on a scaffolding erected before the church of Nôtre Dame, which was built for the occasion in front of the grand portal of the cathedral; the king and the queen mother being present. At the conclusion of the ceremony queen Margaret went to hear mass, and perform her devotions in the choir; and the king of Navarre, proceeding by a gallery, formed for the express purpose along the side of the church, retired to the palace of the archbishop; where a sumptuous dinner was prepared for all the royal household.

CHAPTER III.

Preliminary observations on the massacre of St. Bartholomew. — The term Huguenot explained. — Marriage of admiral Coligny with Jaquelina of Monbel, lady of Entremont.—Policy of France in regard to the Low Countries.—Coligny repairs to Paris.—His favourable reception by the court.—Arrogance of the cardinal of Lorraine.—Marriage of the duke of Guise with Catherine of Cleves.—Oppositions raised to the nuptials of Henry and Margaret.—Arrival of the queen of Navarre at court.—Her death.—Surmises respecting her being poisoned.—Character of Jeanne d'Albret.—Fears entertained for the safety of Coligny by his friends.—The admiral's self-security. — Marriage of Henry with Margaret of Valois, and curious theatrical representation described.—Machinations of Catherine de Medicis to separate her son from Coligny.—The admiral shot at and dangerously wounded by Louviers Maurevel.—Anecdote from Brantome respecting the assassin.—Consternation excited by the admiral's attempted murder.—Interview of Charles with Coligny.— Fears of the queen mother and the duke of Anjou. — Disclosure made to Charles the Ninth of the authors of Coligny's assassination.—Imprudent conduct of the Calvinists.—Charles issues orders for the massacre.—Attempts made to convince Coligny of his danger. —Henry of Navarre and the prince of Condé not included in the proscription. — Preparations for the massacre.— Horrid state of Charles prior to the slaughter.—Murder of Coligny by the hand of Bême.—Savage ferocity of the duke of Angoulême.

As we now approach the detail of one of the most atrocious acts that ever disgraced the records

of history, it becomes necessary to add a few reflections previous to entering upon the horrid recital. The preceding pages are faithful extracts from the narratives and opinions of numerous French writers; and so scrupulous have we been of infringing upon their statements, as to present their ideas without being garbled or misrepresented. We have first to remark, that nearly all the writers extant were favourable to the French court; and that, in consequence, every possible obloquy has been heaped upon the Calvinist party. Among the various writers consulted, the most impartial and valuable production perhaps existing is that of Perefixe, who on the momentous subject of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew merely occupies nine lines; under the conviction, no doubt, of his total incapacity to obliterate any portion of the merited execration attending the deed, and his consequent unwillingness to dwell upon a topic that could not be other than painful to the feelings of his pupil Louis the Fourteenth.

In speaking of the protestants, French historians represent them as the offsprings of treason and rebellion; while the term Huguenot is incessantly disseminated throughout their writings. This denomination is said to have derived its origin from a supposed mischievous sprite or hobgoblin called Hugo, and vulgarly reported to have strolled through the streets of Tours at the dead of night for evil purposes: wherefore, as the reformers, to ensure personal safety, found them-

selves compelled to assemble secretly and in darkness, they were honoured by the catholics with the term Huguenots, or offsprings of the demon Hugo.

The French writers do not fail to enter into very elaborate accounts of horrid cruelties committed by the Calvinists during the wars of the League; and there is little reason to doubt but great faults were committed on either side. At the same time, we see no reason for conjecturing that these sanguinary proceedings had their origin only with the protestants; and certainly, if we may be permitted to draw any inference from the general conduct pursued by catholics during religious dissensions, from the earliest period to the present, there is little reason for annexing to their mode of proceeding the characteristic of tolerance.

The most able writers have never deviated from one opinion—that of the unrelenting and savage barbarity uniformly attending religious persecutions. The wars of monarchs, however cruel in their progress and destructive in their consequences, are notwithstanding legitimate, and pursued under certain regulations and restrictions, to which the highest as well as the lowest subaltern officer is amenable. Such, however, is not the case as regards religious conflicts; for it should seem as if the tenets of mercy and forgiveness, which either party always pretends are the basis of the doctrine it seeks to establish, they are, on the contrary, only rendered sub-

servient to the purposes of hatred, rapine, and blood. We shall no longer detain the reader, but proceed to develope, from the most authentic documents extant, the source and progress of the horrid massacre of Saint Bartholomew until the period of its perpetration.

It is still impossible to ascertain for a fact what were the secret springs of this horrid catastrophe; how far Charles the Ninth was accessory; if, in the first instance it was intended, that the slaughter should extend to such a number of sufferers: in short, to what period it is necessary to go back, in order to ascertain the resolution entered into by the court for the overthrow of Calvinism, by sacrificing those most capable of supporting its doctrines. The crime, once perpetrated, appeared so horrible,—so many persons felt interested in concealing or disguising the facts, for the purpose of destroying, had it been possible, the lasting monuments of their shame,—that it is by no means surprising that, in the discussion of this point of history, we should march, as it were, through a labyrinth of darkness.

Amidst these affected obscurities, however, sufficient light penetrates the gloom to identify the principal advisers and the real authors of this sanguinary catastrophe. As to the thread of the intrigue, from the time of its commencement to the period when the culpable became accomplices, if, upon these points we have not such conclusive proofs, at least there exists sufficient information to satisfy a curiosity governed by

the dictates of reason. Those who produce details after an event, are in the habit of connecting circumstances as if they had all been purposely foreseen and arranged. It is, however, a known fact, that in the progress of the most perfect combinations, circumstances will always intervene which are merely the result of chance and the work of the moment. The application of this principle will be strongly verified in what preceded and occurred subsequent to the affair of Saint Bartholomew.

The peace of Saint Germain having been ratified, as we stated in our last chapter, the court contemplated with infinite pain the confederate Calvinist leaders taking up their abode at La Rochelle, as if apprehensive of some new surprise, which would not have been the case had they separated and returned to their several estates, whose peaceful asylums seemed previously to have been the sole object of their wishes. The king made known to them this sentiment; when they gave for answer, that they did not mistrust his majesty; yet, beholding him uniformly environed by the Guises, and the other fomenters of discord, they had every reason to apprehend the renewal of those prejudices which had been kindled in his infancy against them; that, however, no movements or preparations of a warlike nature were carried on; that they had certainly augmented the forces stationed in the garrisoned towns, merely because the king had adopted that precaution in regard to the adjacent cities; and

lastly, that they only continued associated to assess the quantum of debts they had contracted in support of the common cause.

These reasons were so plausible, that it is unnecessary to offer a reply; and we shall therefore do justice to the integrity of the motives by which the princes and admiral Coligny were actuated. While occupied on stipulations respecting the terms of the peace, the marriage of the prince of Bearn with princess Margaret had been alluded to. This subject was soon after renewed, as a certain means of dissipating all doubts, and uniting a bond of perfect amity. The princess was some years older than Henry; she was sensible and handsome, and already displayed a taste for intrigue that was rather directed towards gallantry than politics. To this proposal Jeanne queen of Navarre answered respectfully, but without definitively pledging herself to any thing.

It might be conceived that an aged warrior like Coligny would have proved inaccessible to the attacks of tenderness: notwithstanding this, however, he loved; his affections were requited; and the nuptials of the man who was looked upon as the most austere in France, were absolutely regarded in the light of a romance. Jaquelina of Monbel, lady of Entremont, a rich widow, possessing very large landed territories in the States of Savoy, entertained a most lively and enthusiastic passion for the admiral, solely the result of his high reputation; and she con-

sequently resolved on bestowing her hand and wealth on that famous hero of Calvinism. Such a determination roused the duke of Savoy, who watched the widow's proceedings: yet, notwithstanding all his vigilance, the wiles of love were more than equivalent to the lynx eye of authority; and Jaquelina, in spite of her guards, effected her escape, and repaired to Rochelle, where she espoused Coligny. The incensed duke of Savoy, in consequence, seized upon her landed possessions: and it was in vain that the king of France made representations in favour of the newly espoused; his good offices were unheeded, and the duke continued inflexible.

The admiral felt little touched at this disgrace; and at the same time gave a more incontestable proof of his disinterestedness, by uniting his daughter Louisa of Chatillon to Teligny, a mere gentleman, possessing no fortune, but gifted with consummate talents as a negotiator, possessing a perfect knowledge of the affairs of either party, and far more capable than any other person to turn them to his own account by his acuteness and rare prudence. The prince of Condé was equally preparing to espouse Mary of Cleves, third sister of the duchess of Guise, who had been brought up by the queen of Navarre in the reformed religion. In addition to this, proposals were made by the French court for the union of Elizabeth of England with the duke of Anjou, brother of Charles the Ninth;

but this overture was not supported by the necessary steps required to ensure its ultimate success.

From a hope of these united circumstances, the public mind became amused, so that the idea of festivities and a new alliance effaced the recollection of war and carnage. The admiral was anxious that the Calvinists should be captivated less by violence than amusement. Brantome, dwelling upon this subject, says, "*I well remember what he (the admiral) said to me at La Rochelle: being fully aware of the character of his Huguenots, he felt that if they were not employed and amused beyond the frontiers, they would not fail to quarrel at home, so well did he know them for wranglers, restless and petulant, and lovers of broils.*" Coligny was ardently desirous of a foreign contest, and did not perceive any war so opportune and advantageous to France as an attack upon the Low Countries.

Those provinces which had revolted against Spain, exhausted by their own victories, were so reduced as to be no longer able to support themselves without the aid of foreign troops; and in case of a refusal on the part of France, they threatened to throw themselves on the protection of England. This was a most cogent reason for impelling France to yield her assistance in order to prevent the advantage from falling into the hands of her rival: in addition to such a plea, there was no shadow of doubt as to the king of Spain, by his counsels, pecuniary assistance, and

well-digested measures, (not owing to the difficulties, but the political views of France,) fomenting and maintaining civil discord in that distracted country. Consequently, the French had not a better plan for avenging themselves, without risk and danger, than opposing the Spanish monarch in his own realm, by means of the French Calvinists, upon whose ruin Spain was unceasingly occupied.

Louis of Nassau, brother of the prince of Orange, visited France for the express purpose of laying his reasons before the council of state. Charles the Ninth appeared to be favourable; but he referred Nassau to Coligny, giving him to understand, that before he pronounced his ultimate decision, he must hold a conference with the admiral. Whether or not this was a predetermined plan to inspire him with a dangerous confidence, it was too flattering not to entrap the confiding Coligny; and the result was, his determination to repair to the court of France.

Towards the end of summer the king went to Blois in Touraine; a step taken in favour of the queen of Navarre, who finding it impossible to refuse with decency the advances of the court, on the subject of its alliance with the prince of Bearn, her son, nevertheless did not comply without feelings of great disquietude. Jeanne conducted Henry to Charles the Ninth, accompanied by the prince of Condé and admiral Coligny. "*I now hold you*," said the king, addressing the venerable warrior, who had thrown himself

at his monarch's feet from sentiments of respect, "*I hold you, and you shall no longer quit us at your will and pleasure.—The present,*" said the king, with an air of satisfaction, "*is the happiest day of my life.*" The sequel of this reception was in every respect similar to its commencement: the queen mother, the duke of Anjou, and all the nobles, loaded Coligny with caresses, and in particular, the duke of Alençon, the king's youngest brother, who, yielding to the frankness characteristic of his years, seemed as if wholly unable to find expressions commensurate with the sentiments of esteem with which he felt penetrated in respect to the admiral's character.

During the pleasures that occurred in consequence of this re-union, conversations turned upon the speedy marriage of prince Henry with Margaret, the king's sister. Some difficulties, on account of religious differences, were started as to the time and manner of celebrating the nuptials; but the king, who ardently desired the conclusion of the business, smoothed every apparent obstacle. Jeanne d'Albret was completely astonished on witnessing so much complaisance; she looked on, she examined with all the scrutinizing circumspection of a person still doubting her own opinions and yet ashamed of giving publicity to such apprehensions. On the other hand, the queen mother, no less curious in regard to Jeanne, observed her motions, and would fain have divined the workings of her inmost soul. The subtle Catherine, conversing one day with

Tavannes, exclaimed, "*How shall I act in order to worm out the secret of the queen of Navarre?*" To which the shrewd counsellor, smiling, replied, "*As the affair rests between women, begin by putting her into a passion, and remain quiet yourself; by that means you will gain every thing from her, and she nothing from you.*"

The Flemish war was equally made the topic of conversation; and memoirs were written for and against that measure. These the king perused, and then conferred with the admiral, whom he equally consulted upon the treaty France was on the point of ratifying with England, on which occasions Charles uniformly appeared to take infinite delight in Coligny's conversations.

In the autumn the admiral demanded leave of absence for the purpose of visiting Châtillon-sur-Loing; the king complied; soon after which he recalled him, and then permitted his journey a second time; and thus terminated the year with every external appearance of a reciprocal confidence.

Whether Charles the Ninth had decided upon the extermination of the Calvinists or not, it is most certain that never was a prince placed in a more critical and embarrassing situation. Suppose the former to have been the case, it was necessary that he should have uniformly spoken the very reverse of his own sentiments; he must have loaded with caresses persons whom he had predestined for slaughter, have watched over the expression of his eyes, and the muscles of his

countenance, in order not to be betrayed by some sudden sally or other involuntary movement. If, on the other hand, his intention was to conciliate the reformers, equal embarrassment arose in respect to the catholics, the foreign princes, the lords of his court, the church dignitaries, and the magistrates, who were unceasingly occupied in filling his mind with apprehensions against those whom he was striving to befriend.

Certainly nothing affected Charles so nearly as the marriage of his sister Margaret with the prince of Bearn; and upon this topic incessant remonstrances were made to him. The Guises murmured, dreading to behold that princess allied to another, to whom the young duke of their house had had the temerity to show the most unequivocal pretensions. The cardinal of Lorraine had explained himself upon this subject in very arrogant terms to the Portuguese ambassador, who had demanded Margaret in marriage for his sovereign. "*The senior of my house,*" said the haughty churchman, alluding to the duke of Lorraine, "*was united to the elder, and the junior shall also have the youngest.*" This bold prediction, however, was not verified. The king being made acquainted with the tenor of this conversation, flew into a violent rage; and the duke, dreading what might prove the result, married, in a very precipitate manner, Catherine of Cleves. But as monarchs have not the control over hearts, the duke of Guise still preserved hidden claims upon that of Margaret; while Charles was apprehensive lest

these secret inclinations on the part of his sister should come to the knowledge of the queen of Navarre, and cool her upon the subject of an alliance with her son. The duke of Anjou equally contemplated this union with disgust, under an apprehension that it would give too much ascendency to the prince of Bearn. Lastly, the pope decried the marriage more violently than the rest, menacing never to grant his dispensation; he even sent his nephew, cardinal Alexandrin, into France, for the sole purpose of preferring representations in favour of the king of Portugal, and to reproach Charles for his intended alliance with the Huguenots.

The legate faithfully performed his mission. He importuned the king most strenuously; and having brought him to a point where the latter had no reply to make, "*My lord cardinal,*" said Charles, evidently much embarrassed, "*would to God that it were in my power to state to you all that I might say! You will soon know, as well as the sovereign Pontiff, that no measure is so proper as this marriage for the maintenance of religion in France, and the extirpation of its enemies. Yes,*" added Charles, pressing the hand of the cardinal most affectionately, "*place confidence in my word; let only a short period elapse, and the Holy Father himself will be compelled to applaud my designs, my piety, and my ardour in the cause of religion.*" The king was then anxious to ratify these promises by slipping a diamond ring upon the finger of the legate; but the cardinal offered his thanks,

saying that he was perfectly satisfied, and placed reliance on the word of the king.

If Charles held this conversation, there cannot exist a doubt but he then meditated the massacre of Saint Bartholomew; but De Thou remarks that it is necessary we should be upon our guard respecting the assertions of Italian writers, from whence the above statement is extracted. The major part, deceived by the Guises, whose interest it was not to stand recorded as the sole authors of such an atrocious action, or deceived by the zealous catholics, mere echoes of the opinions of the Guises, have implicated the whole French court in the conspiracy; and, above all, the king, whom they uniformly place at its head. On the contrary, the memoirs of those periods, written by the best informed persons, namely, *Brantome, queen Margaret, De Cheverni, De Villeroi, De Castelnau,* and in particular *Tavannes,* after whose statements were guided *Dupleix, Le Laboureur,* author of the *Commentaries,* and the best historians, all expressly dwell upon two points; first, that Charles the Ninth did not decide upon the massacre until after the admiral was wounded; and secondly, that he at first only intended the assassination of some of the leaders of the protestants, and by no means the sacrifice of so vast a multitude.

We will now extract from this chaos of matter what appears to be most rational and feasible, and the idea requisite to be formed respecting the progress of this intrigue. We may easily con-

ceive, that from the ratification of peace Charles the Ninth entertained the idea of securing to himself the admiral and his principal associates; and that the winning manners he adopted, in order to lure them to the court, were merely intended to procure for himself the facility of having them in his power, in the event of a renewal of troubles, and to disunite their projects by imprisonment and legal chastisement. We may also presume that the design of keeping down the Calvinists by compulsory operations was changed into lenient measures, when Charles found that they continued quiet, and that they confided in his assurances. This pacific disposition on the part of the king, chequered nevertheless by alternate feelings of apprehension and surmise, may have continued to predominate until the admiral received his wound. In respect to this misfortune, which proved the forerunner of such melancholy events, it was the machination of a black infernal policy, which urged the monarch to extremities never before contemplated; a policy, the whole arcana of which we shall now endeavour to develope.

Charles the Ninth had been too ill served during the war not to wish sincerely for the restoration of peace. Seeing that to compass this desirable end a little condescension towards the Calvinists was alone required, the king had recourse to gentleness; and there is just cause to apprehend that, without adopting their religious opinions, he was friendly to them as men,

The queen mother, whether actuated from state affairs, or a firm attachment to the papal see, was alarmed at this close association: she secretly united herself with the Guises, to bring back her son to his former principles, and to compel him by a tremendous act, if such were necessary, to break off all connexion with the sectarians.

It was, in the first instance, thought necessary to ascertain whether Charles would feel sensibly touched on being abandoned by his ancient friends the catholics; in consequence the Guises, the Montpensiers, and their near relatives, abruptly abandoned the court, saying: "*It was a most odious thing, that a family which had rendered such signal services, should be so neglected, and that, far from avenging the murder of a man who had sacrificed himself for religion and the state, his enemies and his assassins, on the contrary, should be received into special favour.*" Care was taken that these remarks should be faithfully detailed to the king: but they did not appear to make any impression upon his mind; on the contrary, he seemed free and gay in the society of the Calvinists, who had been attracted to the court to witness the nuptials of the prince of Bearn. All, however did not confide in external appearances. "*If this marriage is solemnized at Paris,*" said father de Sulli, "*the liveries will be of a crimson colour!*"

The queen of Navarre arrived at court, and soon after died; when the universal report was her having been poisoned. It is certain that no such

inference could be drawn from the appearances on her person. But what may not be presumed, after the known examples of deaths that were deemed necessary having been procured by different means? Instance that of Lignerolles, favourite and confidant of the duke of Anjou, killed under his own eyes in the middle of the court, because he is stated to have been so unfortunate as to learn the king's secrets from his master, while others state that he had had an intrigue with the queen mother; that of cardinal Odet de Chatillon, poisoned by his valet-de-chambre when on the point of returning to France; of the lord of Moui, assassinated at Niort by Maurevel, publicly called *The King-killer;* and so many others, whose tragic ends converted the smallest circumstances into flagrant proofs.

Jeanne d'Albret, after having been addicted to pleasures, changed that course of life at a period when she still possessed all the requisites for their enjoyment. She reformed her luxurious stile of living, and displayed a rigid devotion, which rendered her the cherished object of her party. She had all the ordinary vices and virtues attendant on this mode of life: severe in her manners, regulated in her domestic concerns, firm in trials of adversity, zealous, liberal; but acrimonious, haughty, fond of disputing on points of theology, and selecting her society from among the Calvinist preachers, for whom her mansion was a regular asylum. In the manifestoes to which Jeanne con-

tributed are always apparent sarcasms, of the most pointed kind, directed against the catholic clergy, and, above all, at the cardinal of Lorraine; which productions obviously announce the mind of an exasperated female. While her son was yet a resident at the court, prior to the excursion to Bayonne, Jeanne sent him a letter, which might be thought less calculated to keep within due bounds a child of nine or ten years of age, than to satisfy her own caustic propensity by censuring vices which did not in any way concern her. She was no less bitter in her reproaches towards those of the same religious persuasion who deviated in the most trifling degree from their duty. The catholics have given testimonies of her courage, constancy, and firmness; and blame her for nothing but her obstinacy, which, in the eyes of the Calvinists, constituted her true glory. The death of Jeanne d'Albret retarded the marriage of Henry, who as we have previously stated, instantly assumed the title of King of Navarre.

During this interval admiral Coligny retired to his castle of Châtillon sur Loing; where he daily received communications from his friends, who conjured him not to return to court. These fears were grounded on a host of conjectures, which, considered singly, could only afford matter, at most, for some suspicions; but which, taken in the aggregate, displayed a body of terrifying presumptions.

Coligny, fully convinced of the king's good

faith, only attended to these representations as a man wearied with the importunate zeal of his friends; while to those with whom he was willing to enter into any explanation, he declared that his measures were already taken with Charles; that a league was signed against Spain, between France, England, and the protestants of Germany; and that war was on the eve of being declared against the Low Countries. If it was hinted to the admiral that troops were assembled by order of the court on the confines of Poitou, he immediately gave answer that they were not intended to act against Rochelle, but the Low Countries, from whence vessels were to transport them; that this expedient had been adopted by his advice, as well to spare the troops the fatigue of a long march, as to deceive the enemy. If the loans set on foot by Charles in every direction were hinted at, Coligny replied, that such sums were intended to meet the exigencies of war; and that they were procured from catholic princes in preference, in order to deprive them of pecuniary resources: in fine, he pretended to have nothing to apprehend from the Guises, because the king had effected their reconciliation, and that, independently of such circumstance, they had no longer much credit; that even the cardinal of Lorraine, the most powerful among them, was then occupied with the conclave at Rome, and far from having it in his power to prove detrimental; but that, even was he deceived, he most earnestly supplicated his friends

to fatigue him no longer on the subject of such apprehensions.

The marriage of Henry was solemnized; on which occasion it was remarked, that the standards taken at the battle of Jarnac and Montcontour ornamented the vaultings of the cathedral of Notre Dame. On beholding those trophies, Coligny, pointing them out to marshal Damville, said, "*They shall speedily be replaced by others more agreeable to the eyes of Frenchmen.*"

We cannot close the subject of this marriage, without quoting a note from the *Henriade* of Voltaire; wherein it is stated, that, during the festivities that then took place, a horrible allegory was represented, displaying the Huguenots precipitated by the catholics into hell, and the latter then mounting into Paradise. This recital is strictly correct; in proof of which, for the amusement of those who have a taste for ancient theatrical representations, we quote the following account literally from *Memoirs of the State of France under Charles the Ninth.*

"Wednesday, the 20th of August, were represented fêtes that had long been preparing in the hall of Bourbon, the same being as follow. First, in the said chamber to the right, was represented Paradise, the entrance to which was defended by three knights armed *cap à pied*, who represented the king and his brothers: to the left was hell, wherein appeared a great number of devils and little imps, performing monkey-tricks, and creating a horrid din by means of a

large wheel turning round in the said infernal regions, whereto numerous bells were affixed. Paradise and hell were separated by a river running between the two, in which was a boat ferried by Charon, the boatman of Styx. At one end of the hall, behind Paradise, were the Elysian fields; that is to say, a garden embellished with verdure and all kinds of flowers; and the empyreum, which was a great wheel, with the twelve signs of the zodiac, the seven planets, and an infinity of small perforated stars, emitting a very clear and beautiful light, by means of lamps and flambeaus which were artificially arranged behind. This wheel was in constant motion, causing the garden also to turn, wherein appeared twelve nymphs very richly caparisoned. In the apartment were seen many bands of knights-errant completely armed, and arrayed in divers liveries, conducted by princes and nobles; all of whom endeavoured to gain admission to Paradise, in order to go after the nymphs who were in the garden; but were prevented by the three knights keeping watch at the gate, and who in succession entered the lists, and having broken the lances of their assailants, and then fought with broad swords, despatched them to hell, whither they were dragged by the demons. This mode of combat continued until all the knights-errant were beaten and consigned to the devils; upon which the entrance of hell was closed. At the same moment Mercury and Cupid were seen to de-

scend from heaven upon a cock, the former singing and dancing; Mercury being represented by *Etienne le Roi*, so much renowned for his singing, who, having alighted on earth, presented himself to the three knights, and, after a melodious chant, made a speech; at the termination of which he re-ascended singing, upon his cock, and in this manner was transported back to heaven. The three knights then arose from their seats, and, traversing Paradise, proceeded to salute the nymphs in the Elysian fields; whom they escorted into the midst of the hall, and then began to perform a very diversified ball which continued the length of an hour. This dance completed, the knights who were confined in hell were delivered, and then began to combat pell mell, breaking many lances; so that on all sides sparks were seen to issue forth from the weapons. At the conclusion of the combat, fire was communicated to a train of powder which environed a fountain prepared almost in the centre of the apartment; from whence issued a noise and smoke that caused every one present to retire."

Coligny being uniformly occupied on the subject of the projected war in the Low Countries, the king gradually felt interested in the measure. In regulating the plan of operations, the politic admiral made the young monarch feel that he must not conduct himself during that campaign as upon previous occasions; that is to say, confide his forces to his brother the duke of Anjou,

who had thus acquired all the honour of the victory; but that the king, on the contrary, should in person place himself at the head of his forces. The queen, your mother, added Coligny, only seeks to hold you under her guardianship for the purpose of governing alone; it is on that account she has engaged you to name a lieutenant-general; but it is high time to discard such bondage, and to present yourself to your people as a brave and worthy commander.

Such conferences as these produced a very lively impression on the mind of a king at once susceptible and jealous. Catherine ascertained these facts; but, assured of her ascendency, she in the first instance only adopted some general measures—such as to secure to herself, in case of necessity, the succour of the Guises and their partisans. The danger, however, augmented. The queen received timely notice from Villequier, De Sauve, and Retz, assiduous and observant courtiers, in whom even the king placed great confidence, that her son was on the point of escaping from her trammels, that he was entirely brought over by the reformers, and that, without some violent remedy, it would be in vain to think of recalling him to his duty.

To such a pressing evil Catherine resolved to administer a bold remedy. She selected the period of a hunting-match, during which her son was removed to a distance from those advisers, who usually surrounded him. She hurried him to an adjoining castle, shut herself up with him in a

private study, and immediately commenced by uttering the most bitter reproaches. The queen united tenderness with force: she recapitulated to him every act she had performed for him since the period of infancy—the sufferings she had experienced, the dangers she had undergone, from those very men, with whom he had the imprudence to connect himself so closely. "If they assume the mastery," said Catherine, weeping bitterly, "what will become of me? How will it then fare with the duke of Anjou, the unvarying object of their hatred? How shall we escape their fury? *Grant me permission,*" added she, "*to return back to Florence, and allow your brother time enough to effect his flight.*"

The king terrified, *not so much,* says Tavannes, *on account of the Huguenots, as of his mother and brother, whose artifice, ambition, and power in the state he was fully acquainted with,* and apprehending a revolution, if he continued to support the Calvinists, made confession of his faults to the queen, and supplicated that she would excuse him. The Machiavelian Catherine, feigning unalterable anger, retired to an adjoining mansion, whither Charles followed her. He there found his mother in company with the duke of Anjou and the courtiers De Retz, Tavannes, and De Sauve, holding a species of council. This tended only to increase the youthful monarch's disquietude, who trembled at the idea of some secret machinations being plotted against his own person.

Charles now entered upon a fresh explanation,

and then demanded that he might at least be made acquainted with any new crimes attributable to the Calvinists. All present eagerly sought to satisfy him on this subject, by detailing every thing they knew respecting their real or alleged pretensions. One stated, that, not satisfied with the free enjoyment of religious toleration, they were also anxious to abolish the catholic persuasion; another, that they arrogated to themselves the having possession of the king's mind, and that, in consequence, they should in future act as they thought fit; that the admiral, in particular, never ceased to extol his own martial achievements, and that he promised himself at some future period ample vengeance for the arrests and proscriptions formerly issued against him.

We are told by Brantome that the leading Calvinists were often very unguarded in their modes of expression; and as it may be supposed the queen mother and her partisans never palliated such representations, it is not surprising that, conjoined with fears for his personal safety, Charles, thus assailed, found himself obliged to submit; and therefore promised to hold himself more upon his guard for the future, in order that Coligny and his party should not take advantage of his bounty. But, as it did not yet appear that the monarch felt completely decided, it was resolved he should become so far committed in regard to the Calvinists, as to have no possibility of any future reconciliation.

This resolution taken, a courier was forwarded to the duke d'Aumale, who immediately repaired to Paris with his nephew the duke of Guise, the dukes of Nemours, Elbeuf, Nevers, Montpensier, and a large retinue of gentlemen. All this took place prior to the marriage of the king of Navarre, and it was deemed expedient not to delay the opportunity of silencing the fears excited by the admiral for more than four days.

An assassin was soon found; the individual selected being the famous Louviers Maurevel, who concealed himself in a mansion before which the admiral passed daily on his return from the Louvre. By means of a window before which a curtain was drawn, he fired upon Coligny with an arquebuse, the balls from which inflicted a very deep wound in his left arm, and cut through the leader of the right hand. Without betraying the least emotion, the admiral pointed out the hotel from whence the piece had been discharged: the doors were broken open, but the murderer had already effected his escape; while Coligny, bleeding profusely and accompanied by his attendants, was instantly supported to his hotel.

In Brantome's Life of Lanoue, speaking of this Maurevel, that writer states he was the same fellow who assassinated the lord de Moui, and had such an ill-looking countenance, that, in 1573, having followed marshal De Retz, (who had been ambassador to England,) one of the British nobles, struck with his repulsive features, sternly

fixing him, recognized the assassin without any previous knowledge, exclaiming, "*I will wager any thing, that is the admiral's murderer.*" It is singular, continues our author, and we cordially join in the same opinion, that any ambassador could consent to tolerate such a cut-throat in his retinue: nothing can better depict the ferocious manners of the French court at that period. Divine justice, however, did not permit the crimes of this sanguinary villain to go unpunished; as he was himself afterwards assassinated by the son of the lord de Moui, whose father had fallen by his hand; while the avenger of that nobleman's death, some minutes after this culpable deed, was himself shot dead by a ball from an arquebuse.

Charles the Ninth was amusing himself in the tennis court when he learned this fatal news. "*Shall I never enjoy repose?*" he exclaimed, dashing the racket from his grasp with fury; "*am I every day condemned to witness fresh troubles?*" The news of this assassination soon spread throughout the city, and inspired terror and consternation among the Huguenot party: some menaced aloud, while others were sad and dispirited; all gave different advice, dictated according to the predominating passions of terror, rage, and audacity. Several proposed that the admiral should be carried off, and that his party should accompany him from Paris. Coligny opposed this design, saying, that the blow had merely been directed by the Guises: he displayed the greatest calmness, and only appeared occupied in en-

deavouring to revive the spirits of his partisans. All historians agree in attributing this atrocious act to Catherine and the duke of Anjou, and it is hardly possible to form any other opinion; but if the general massacre had been decided upon, it is natural to imagine they would not have failed to put it into effect immediately after this attempt on the admiral's life, in order that the Calvinists might have had no time to collect their ideas and put themselves on their guard. It was perhaps imagined that the murder of Coligny would have instantly excited a seditious movement among the Calvinists; and under this supposition, previous measures that could not fail of success, would have been taken to exterminate the Huguenots by superiority of numbers, as there were not more than from two to three thousand Calvinists then assembled in that capital. Such a mode of hurrying them into eternity would have appeared much less odious than a proscription, because it might have been represented as the effect of a combat, and an attempt at sedition justly punished. But the reformers remained peaceable, and contented themselves with making complaints to Charles the Ninth and demanding justice. The king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé, undertook to present the petition; and Charles issued orders that every necessary measure should be adopted for the purpose of discovering and seizing the murderer. The gates of Paris were accordingly closed; commissaries were deputed to collect instruc-

tions; domiciliary visits took place in all suspected houses; and, as the admiral was excessively hated by the populace, to preserve his person from all insult a strong guard was stationed at the portal of his hotel.

Some historians have stated that this measure was adopted to prevent the admiral from quitting Paris; whereas it was himself, who, alarmed at the assembling of the people, and the cruel joy they testified at his attempted assassination, demanded a guard from the king, when Swiss troops, constituting part of the king of Navarre's body troop, were nominated to perform that duty. Charles further made known to all the ambassadors from foreign courts, "*that he would proceed in such a manner as to discover and punish those who had been culpable of so wicked an act;*" and he equally ordered his ministers to forward similar communications to the several governors of the provinces. These conclusive steps sufficed to do away every doubt as to his sincerity; and it really does appear that Charles was in complete ignorance respecting the whole of this vile transaction. The queen mother expressed strong suspicions against the duke of Guise; *nothing, however, could appease the king*, says queen Margaret; *he could not moderate the passionate desire he felt to deal justice on the assassin, continuing still to issue commands that the duke of Guise should be sought after, and seized, for that he would not suffer such a deed to remain unpunished.* After twelve o'clock on the day when this tragic event

had transpired, Coligny expressed a wish to see the king. Charles repaired to the apartment of the sufferer, accompanied by his mother, (dreadfully agitated respecting the results of this visit,) the duke of Anjou, the French marshals, and a brilliant retinue. It is possible that the admiral may have divined the real authors of this sanguinary crime. The king, who addressed him by the name of father, and was overcome by sentiments of veneration and friendship towards Coligny, might have been enlightened during this meeting. All the first ebullitions of Charles were violent and terrible: had he therefore, on a sudden, discovered that his feelings were tampered with, and that the contrivers of the attempt, which inspired him with such well-grounded indignation, were his mother and his brother, there would have been every reason to apprehend the worst from the ungovernable fury of his resentment. It was on this account, that, when the queen and the duke of Anjou entered the admiral's chamber, they were observed to turn pale, and betray evident signs of internal disquietude, added to which, they were surrounded by Calvinists, whose melancholy demeanour and scowling regards tended only to increase the secret terror of their souls.

Charles commenced by addressing the admiral, to whom he offered consolation, and vehemently swore, *in the name of God*, (a bad habit he had contracted,) that he would extract from this crime a vengeance so terrible that it should

never be effaced from the remembrance of man. Coligny returned his warm acknowledgments; and, after protesting the fidelity of his sentiments, changed the conversation to the projected war in Flanders, on which his thoughts were unceasingly occupied. Coligny explained to the king, that he delayed the declaration too long; that, during this lapse of time, many brave soldiers, who, under the conduct of Genlis, by the secret avowal of his majesty, had expressly marched into the Low Countries in his service, had been defeated from a want of support, and after their overthrow treated as marauders by the duke of Alva; that this projected war was publicly ridiculed at court, and that the council of Spain was aware of every step that was decided upon in that of France. He also complained that the edicts passed in favour of the Calvinists were not duly observed. "*Father*," answered the king, "*rely upon it, I always regard you as a faithful subject, and one of the bravest generals of my kingdom. Rely upon me for the care of having my edicts observed, and your injuries avenged, as soon as the guilty shall be brought to light.*"—"*It is not very difficult to find them*," replied the admiral; "*the indications are sufficiently obvious.*"—"*Tranquillize your feelings*," resumed the king; "*to prolong these emotions might only be detrimental to your wound.*"

On concluding these words, Charles moved towards the door, asked to see the ball which had been extracted from the wound, enquired concerning every circumstance of the transac-

tion, and mode adopted for a cure; and then, having testified some emotions of tenderness and interest for the health of the invalid, he quitted the chamber. During this visit, which lasted for about an hour, it was remarked, that the queen mother never quitted the king's side, and that she uniformly leant an ear to catch every syllable that transpired, as if apprehensive of losing a single word that might escape Coligny in addressing her son. This was a useless precaution, if we may place reliance upon the recital of Miron, physician of the duke of Anjou, written in Poland under the diction of that prince; wherein he states, that Coligny found means to convey some words to Charles which were not overheard; for, as the queen and himself observed that they were in the apartment of the admiral surrounded by Calvinists, Catherine and the duke shuddered, and felt their minds overcome by sudden terror.

In fact, a word would have been sufficient to ruin Catherine and the duke of Anjou, owing to the violent temperament of Charles; and it was this very fury, so much dreaded, which at length prompted them to reveal the whole mystery to the king. For this purpose marshal de Retz was elected, who possessed the confidence of his sovereign, and knew best how to bring him over to his views. This nobleman repaired to the king's private study; and after paving the way by offering those palliatives that were necessary to make him digest such a disclosure, he con-

fessed to the monarch that the admiral's wound was not the work of Guise alone, but of his mother and the duke of Anjou; that they were urged to the measure by the secret plottings of that rebel, who was endeavouring to compass their overthrow; that the deed once committed, there was no longer any medium, and that it was therefore either necessary to combine with the catholics, in order to complete what was begun, or expect for a certainty the renewal of a civil war. These preliminary disclosures being made, the queen presented herself, as had previously been decided on, accompanied by the duke of Anjou, the count of Nevers, Birague, the keeper of the seals, and marshal Tavannes. Catherine confirmed to her son all that the duke de Retz had uttered; and added, that since the admiral had received his wound, the Huguenots had yielded themselves up to such despair, that it was to be apprehended they would not only lay violent hands upon the duke of Guise, but hazard an attempt on royalty itself.

For these assertions there was, in fact, too much ground, as the imprudent conversations of many of the Calvinists afforded just reason for such representations. They openly proclaimed, that in case the king did not do them justice, they would procure it for themselves. Pardaillan publicly made such an avowal at the queen's supper; and the lord de Piles went farther, having expressed himself in similar terms before the king: "*The indiscreet words, insolent ges-*

tures, and frowning brow of this daring nobleman," says Dupleix, vol. iii. page 514, "*made the king and all the catholics of his court tremble.*" In the Memoirs of Marshal de Tavannes, we also find that the above named Pardaillan carried his insolence to such a length as to proceed to the chastisement of Nambur, who was in attendance at the door of the king's apartment, because he had refused to give him admittance.

While recapitulating these menaces to Charles in the secret council, Catherine moreover affirmed, that since the admiral had been wounded, several despatches had been by him forwarded to Germany and Switzerland, from whence he hoped to draw a force of twenty thousand men; that if such an army formed a junction with the disaffected French, deprived as the king then was of men and money, she saw no hope of safety for the state; that she was, at all events, glad to give him previous notice, that upon the least appearance of collusion between himself and the sectarians, the catholics were resolved to elect a captain-general, and to form a league offensive and defensive against the Huguenots; and that he would thus find himself placed between the two factions, without any power or authority in his kingdom.

"*These considerations,*" says the duke d'Anjou, in the detail given by Miron, "*produced a marvellous and strange metamorphosis in the mind of the king; for it had been previously difficult to persuade him, and it now became our turn to secure*

him. Rising from his seat, he exclaimed in fury and rage, swearing by the name of . . . . . that if we were of opinion the admiral should be sacrificed, he was equally so; and that with him all the Huguenots of France should perish, in order that not one of them might remain to reproach him for the deed afterwards; and he therefore commanded us to give prompt orders accordingly."

In the Memoirs of Marshal de Tavannes he expressly states, that in this council only the chiefs of the Calvinists were doomed to suffer, but that the populace executed the rest. He even adds that the queen mother, *as a fearful woman, would very gladly have recalled her words, had it not been for the courage again instilled into her mind by the counsellors present.* These advisers we will now proceed to record by name, in order that they may be handed down to posterity with all the execration due to their infamous memories; they consisted of marshal de Tavannes; Birague, keeper of the seals; the duke de Retz; and Louis de Gonzague, duke of Nevers. It is with infinite regret we name the latter nobleman; he having been regarded, until that period, as one of the most upright men in the kingdom. Had the duke only constituted one in this infernal council to defend the cause of humanity, he would have performed nothing but a praiseworthy action; but we are expressly told from history, that the resolution to assassinate all the Huguenot leaders was unanimous. Can it then be admitted, that a barbarous policy,

and any particular chain of reasoning, could, during the first moments of an unaccountable illusion, urge a virtuous man to sanction a most execrable deed? Henry the Fourth doubtless harboured this opinion; since he ultimately placed the greatest possible confidence in this identical duke of Nevers.

The dreadful decree once pronounced, nothing more was thought of but its immediate execution: and Charles, from that moment, had recourse to all the duplicity which it was deemed expedient to adopt on the occasion. It was decided that the whole body of Calvinists should be collected in one particular quarter of the city, in order to entrap them all at once as in a net; and they themselves furnished the very means. Some days previous, a regiment of the guards, under other pretexts, had been marched into the capital; when the king not only placed one company before the hotel of Coligny, but he also issued his orders that all the catholics in that neighbourhood should yield up their lodgings for the use of the Calvinists. For this purpose the city officers were deputed to make out a list, and they were exhorted to repair to the vicinity of the admiral's residence. Upon a similar principle, the Swiss guards of the king of Navarre were placed in Coligny's house; and the prince himself was ordered by the king to collect, at the palace of the Louvre, all the individuals specially attached to his person, in order to serve at court as a safeguard against the Guises, in case they

should be desirous of attempting some daring enterprise.

So many precautions, which were all apparently in favour of the Calvinists, inspired confidence in the major part of the reformers and friends of the admiral: some, however, still insisted on adopting the most prudent measure, which would have been to transport the wounded Coligny from Paris, and wait at a distance the threatening storm; but the admiral pertinaciously opposed such a measure, stating, it would be offering an affront to the king, and that he would rather rely upon his promises, even should he become the victim of his confidence. Teligni and Rochefoucauld indulged similar ideas; yet, notwithstanding this union of sentiment in the chiefs, it did not prevent the most mistrustful from hazarding new efforts to effect their views: they stated that a quantity of arms had been transported to the Louvre; as if the court was desirous of converting the palace into an arsenal, from whence should issue the thunders destined to crush them. The invalid replied, that those preparations were intended for a tournament; as the king was desirous of enjoying such an entertainment, and that he had kindly made known to him his intention to that effect: to this the admiral's friends replied, the whole might be but a feint, and that, in such case, precautions ought not to be neglected. The zealous conduct, however, of Coligny's advisers was still unattended by success.

The queen mother, however, who had spies amongst the Huguenot party, learned the nature of their deliberations; and this determined her to expedite the execution of the plot, which was fixed for the break of day on the festival of Saint Bartholomew, the 24th of August, 1572. This resolution took place at the Tuileries, between Catherine, the duke of Anjou, the duke of Nevers, the count of Angoulême, bastard brother to the king, Birague, keeper of the seals, marshal Tavannes, and the count de Retz. It was deliberated in this secret council, whether the king of Navarre, the prince of Condé, and the Montmorencies, should be registered among the proscribed. In the Memoirs of Marshal de Tavannes, he ascribes to himself the glory of having, by his advice, saved the lives of the two princes; but it appears that nearly all the members of the council were of that opinion. Some writers have pretended that the original idea was to inspirit the Calvinist and catholic leaders, so as to bring them to open combat; and that, when exhausted with their efforts, the king should have issued from the Louvre at the head of his guards, have fallen indiscriminately upon the mass, and then made a butchery of the whole: in short, it is difficult to say whether the massacre was intended to have been so general. "*For myself*," exclaimed the queen mother, after the conclusion of the horrid tragedy, "*I have no more than six upon my conscience.*" Great God! what a horrible species of self-security!!

The first great deed of vengeance—the murder of admiral Coligny—was confided to his implacable foe the duke of Guise; and, in order to obliterate even the shadow of suspicion from the minds of the Huguenots, the princes of Lorraine pretended to have fears of violent measures from their enemies, and under this pretext demanded the king's permission to retire. "*Go,*" said Charles, with an assumed air of rage, "*if you are culpable, I shall easily know how to find you again.*" Being thus dismissed, and enabled to conceal their movements under the semblance of the embarrassment that uniformly accompanies an intended departure, they were the more easily enabled to assemble their creatures without creating suspicion.

Tavannes summoned to the king's presence Jean Charron, provost of the merchants of Paris, and his predecessor Marcel, who possessed great credit with the people: he then gave them orders to arm the citizens, and keep them in readiness at the hôtel de ville for the hour of midnight; this command they promised to obey; but, when made acquainted with the intention of this armament, they trembled, and began to excuse themselves under the plea of their consciences. Tavannes then threatened the king's indignation, and even excited the monarch against them, who appeared himself too indifferent upon the subject. Dwelling upon this topic, Brantome says, "*The poor devils not being able to act otherwise, then said: Well, sire, and you, sir, if it is*

thus matters are to be taken, we swear that you shall receive good news; for we will collect bands so well together, through thick and thin, that the remembrance shall never be obliterated. Such," continues our author, "*was a determination adopted with more than accustomed force and violence; and it is never advisable to goad on a populace, for in the end its vengeance becomes more terrible than was required or expected.*" The provost then received his instructions, which were, that the signal was to be the tolling of the bell of the palace-clock; two flambeaus were to be placed in a certain window; body-guards were to be stationed in all the squares and cross-ways; and, in order to know one another, the assassins were to wear a white scarf tied round the left arm, and to place white crosses in their caps. After every thing was arranged, according to these previous dispositions, in the most dreadful silence, the king, fearing to arrest the enterprise from a sentiment of commiseration, did not dare save the count de la Rochefoucauld, whom he loved. Seeing him, towards night, on the point of quitting the Louvre, Charles invited, and then pressed him to remain: the count, however, refused; when the king, being unable to retain him without hazarding his secret, abandoned him to his fate, shuddering from the bottom of his soul at being thus compelled to sacrifice his friend for the preservation of his secret. Every thing was atrocious in this unexampled conspiracy of a sovereign against his subjects. Its conception, execution, its details,

and feelings of the most sacred nature were either annihilated, changed, or perverted. Religious zeal became an impious frenzy; filial piety degenerated into sanguinary fury; and obedience to the monarch was changed to the most execrable cowardice.

Charles, swayed by terror and impelled by the violence of his character, issued with impetuosity all the orders that were dictated to him. A complete slave to the queen mother and those vile courtiers who goaded him on to the fathomless abyss of infamy, he became intoxicated with vengeance and fury; and thus his passion, during a transient period, closed every avenue to remorse. With sparkling eyes, and blasphemy on his lips, it might have been thought, on beholding the king, that he was sole author of this monstrous crime, then on the very eve of perpetration. He gave himself up freely to all that was demanded at his hands; but when the blow was decided upon, and the various orders issued, Charles on a sudden yielded to sullen gloom; sad and appalled, he awaited in silence and secret horror the fatal moment of the massacre. The queen mother and the duke of Anjou did not quit his side, striving in vain to reanimate his spirits; nothing, however, could rouse him from this terrifying lethargy. Peace becomes for ever an alien to that breast which has just perpetrated a horrid crime; and inactivity of body without mental quiet is the first torture to which it is subjected.

Charles, uniformly followed by his mother and the duke of Anjou, entered a small study adjoining the portal of the Louvre; he seated himself under the archway of one of the windows, and looked out, shuddering with apprehension. The report of a pistol was heard! "*I cannot say from what direction,*" says the duke of Anjou, "*the noise proceeded, but I well know the sound deeply affected us all three; it struck our senses and our judgments, bewildered with apprehensions and terrors, with a certainty of the great enormities which were on the eve of perpetration.*" The king, struck with horror, arose, and in conjunction with the queen and the duke of Anjou, immediately despatched a gentleman with directions to the duke of Guise to undertake nothing against the person of the admiral,—a command which, if attended to, would have put a stop to every thing; but it was too late! The vindictive duke, fired with vengeance, had with difficulty awaited to behold the projected signal in order to rush to the dwelling of his victim. In the king's name the doors were immediately opened, and the porter who surrendered up the keys was stabbed on the instant. The Swiss of the Navarre guard, surprised, took flight and concealed themselves; when three colonels of the French troops, accompanied by Petrucci, Siennois, and Bême, a German, with an escort of soldiers, rushed into the hotel and precipitately ascended the staircase. From the dreadful noise which resounded in all directions, the admiral

immediately surmised that his life was sought for. He rose from the bed, and, leaning his back against the wall, with clasped hands and eyes devoutly raised to heaven, began to ejaculate a contrite prayer. Having forced open the bed-room door with cries of *Death! Death!* Bême rushing forward, sword in hand, was the first who beheld Coligny thus fervently occupied, who instantly exclaimed, "*Is it thou who art Coligny?*" "*It is I myself,*" answered the admiral, who thus continued: "*Young man, respect my white hairs.*" Bême replied by plunging his sword into his body, upon which the admiral fell bathed in his blood, when he was instantly pierced by an hundred other swords. "*It is done,*" cried Bême from the window. "*The duke of Angoulême will not believe it,*" answered the duke of Guise from the street, "*but on beholding the corpse at his feet:*" and instantly the mutilated carcase was precipitated from the casement into the court-yard. The duke of Angoulême then wiped the gore from the admiral's visage with his own hand, in order to recognize the features; after which the prince is stated to have so far forgotten himself as to kick the corpse about with his feet. Hatred combining with every impulse of vengeance, and the very last degree of dastardly barbarity having been adopted, the body became a prey to all the disgusting outrages of popular frenzy. The admiral's head was severed from the trunk, and the corpse, cruelly mutilated, dragged through the streets

to the place of execution, and there suspended by the feet to the gibbet of Montfaucon.

In the manuscript Memoirs of Dangeau, it is stated, that marshal Montmorency during the night caused Coligny's body to be taken down from the gallows, and, as that writer believes, had it interred at Chantilly. In 1718, when demolishing the old chapel of the castle of Chantilly, a leaden coffin was discovered, which is supposed to have contained the body of the admiral. As to his murderer, the execrable Bême, we are told by Brantome that he was a gentleman, by birth a German, and had become the favourite of the duke of Guise, who after the admiral's assassination realized his fortune. Bême was subsequently employed in Spain, and on his return to France fell into the hands of the Calvinists, who committed him to prison, where he was shortly after massacred; and in the sequel Divine justice completed its vengeance at Blois, for the base assassination of the brave Coligny.

CHAPTER IV.

Massacre of Saint Bartholomew.—Narrow escape of Henry.—Princess Margaret's account of that horrid event.—Henry and the prince of Condé conducted to Charles the Ninth.—Revolting acts committed during the slaughter.—Providential escape of young Rosny.—Singular trait of generosity.—Celebrated catholics who fell during the carnage.—Disgraceful conduct of the king and queen, and licentious depravity of the female courtiers.—Charles the Ninth fires upon the Huguenots, and parades the streets of Paris with his court to view the slaughter.—The king and his surgeon Ambrose Paré.—False plea adduced to palliate the massacre; and conduct of De Thou.—Infamous policy of Catherine de Medicis, and farther scenes of bloodshed the result.—Instances of humanity.—Various accounts of the numbers of protestants slain.—Modes adopted to terrify Henry and procure his abjuration.—He abjures, as well as the prince of Condé.—Execution of Briquemont and Cavagne.—Cruel edict passed on the memory of Coligny.—Character of the admiral.—Sentiments entertained by the several European powers in regard to the affair of Saint Bartholomew.—Manners of the courts of Charles the Ninth and Henry the Third.

On the 24th of August, 1572, at four in the morning, the palace bell tolled: the fatal signal for the massacre of Saint Bartholomew; which announced to the catholics that admiral Coligny was no more. The assassins, who were armed with daggers and pistols, had adopted the preconcerted badges on their arms and in their caps,

in order to recognize one another. On hearing the shoutings, cries, and tumult, which immediately followed the sound of the palace bell, the Calvinists, half dressed and unarmed, rushed forth from their dwellings: those who proceeded to gain the residence of the admiral, were slaughtered by the company of guards posted in front of the entrance; if they sought for refuge in the Louvre, they were driven back by the pikes of the soldiers, and assailed by discharges from fire-arms; and in their flight from thence they fell amidst the troops of the duke of Guise and the patroles of citizens, who made a horrid carnage of the defenceless fugitives. The populace *en masse*, now aroused, flew to arms, seizing every weapon which presented itself, and then rushing in crowds to every quarter of the city, no sound was heard but the horrible cry—*Kill the Huguenots*. From the streets they proceeded to the hotels, when, forcing open the gates, breaking the windows, and throwing down walls, every one, without any distinction of age or sex, was indiscriminately massacred; the air resounded with the horrid cries of the murderers, the piercing shrieks of the wounded, and the groans of the dying; the slaughter became general. During the first day no pillage took place, the thirst for cupidity was smothered by the impulse of barbarous rage; victims, and not riches, were then the objects of their search; gold was despised, and nothing worthy of consideration but human blood. Headless trunks were every

instant precipitated from the windows into the court-yards or the streets; the gateways were choked up with the bodies of the dead and dying, and the streets presented a spectacle of human bodies dragged by their butchers in order to be thrown into the Seine.

The royal palace, which ought to have offered a sacred asylum, a paternal refuge, was stained by the same horrors. In a moment the Louvre was filled with assassins. The king of Navarre was suddenly awakened from his sleep by the forcing open the door of his chamber by several of his friends and officers; some already wounded rushed forward to die at his feet, while the remainder were butchered under his eyes. Henry, unable to defend them, disdained to seek refuge in flight: the murderers surrounded his bed, and uttered loud menaces; but he manifested so much firmness, and inspired them with such a sentiment of respect, that they did not dare attempt his life; or, we may almost say, that a miracle of Divine Providence rescued the prince, who was intended at a future period to repair so many ills. Henry at length found means to escape to the royal apartments, and the assassins, an hour afterwards, forced their way to the chamber of the young queen Margaret, whose interesting narrative, recorded by herself, we will now proceed to give, as a most lively record of this horrid scene.

The night of the affair of Saint Bartholomew, the queen mother, perceiving her daughter

up rather late, commanded her to retire. "*As I was in the act of performing my obeisance,*" says Margaret, "*my sister of Lorraine took me by the arm, stopped me, and beginning to weep most bitterly, said: Good heaven, sister, do not go!*" On witnessing this conduct, Catherine became irritated, and reproached her eldest daughter for the imprudence of her conduct. "*What a sight,*" answered the former, "*to send her thus to be sacrificed! If they discover any thing, they will avenge themselves upon her.*" This altercation finished by Margaret receiving fresh commands from her mother to retire; when her sister, bursting into tears, embraced her. "*As for myself,*" continues Margaret, "*I quitted the chamber astonished and quite bewildered, without having the most distant idea of any thing that was to be apprehended.*"

"Summoned to the apartment of my husband, *I found his bed surrounded by thirty or forty Huguenots, whom I did not as yet know; during the night they continued to converse of nothing but the accident which had happened to the admiral. The tears of my sister still continued to weigh heavily at my heart, and I could not sleep for the dreadful apprehension she had excited, without being able to divine the cause. In this manner the night passed on, without my being allowed to close my eyes.*" Before dawn of day, Henry arose and quitted the chamber, accompanied by all his gentlemen; when the young queen, overcome by fatigue, caused the doors to be closed, and then resigned herself to sleep.

About an hour after, Margaret suddenly started, aroused on hearing a noise occasioned by some one striking against the door with their feet and hands, and crying aloud *Navarre, Navarre!* Her attendant believing that it was the king, opened the door; when a man bleeding profusely reeled forward into the apartment followed by four archers, who entered promiscuously with him: he had received a sword-wound in the wrist, and one from a halbert in the arm: "*Being anxious to screen his person,*" continues Margaret, "*he threw himself on my bed; upon which, finding my person grasped by the man, I sprang to the bedside, and he after me, continuing to clasp me round the body. I did not know the man, and had no knowledge whether he came to offer me insult, or if the archers intended their attacks against him or myself. We both screamed aloud, the one being as much affrighted as the other.*" At length the captain of the guard arrived, who sent away the archers, and spared the man's life, in consequence of the queen's entreaties, after which he conducted her to the apartment of the duchess of Lorraine. Just as Margaret entered the antechamber, a gentleman at three paces distance was pierced through by a halberdman, and fell dead at her side; upon which she fainted, and was not restored until she found herself in safety with her sister.

The first terror experienced by Margaret was for the safety of the king her husband; she in consequence made enquiries, and received as-

surances that no ill had befallen him. Charles the Ninth had commanded, that the king of Navarre and the prince of Condé should be conducted to his presence; *he received them with an expression of ferocity, and eyes sparkling with rage,* immediately stating, that the admiral and his rebel chiefs had been slaughtered by his command; that with respect to themselves, being fully convinced they had been led into the revolt more from evil advice than of their own free will, he was ready to pardon them, provided they would abjure their false religion, and adopt the Catholic persuasion; but as the answer was rather ambiguous and embarrassed, Charles allowed them three days for consideration. Perefixe says, that the king's words, on the entrance of the princes, were, *Death or the Mass!*

From the chamber in which this interview took place, king Henry and the prince of Condé could hear the last groans of their friends, whose murders were perpetrating in the Louvre. The guards having ranged themselves in two rows, ran through with their halberds the disarmed victims who were presented to them for assassination, and who were thrust forward into the midst of them when they expired, piled in heaps one upon the other. The major part received the stroke of death without uttering a syllable, others appealed to public faith, and the king's royal word. *Great God!* was their cry, *vindicate the cause of the oppressed: Just Judge, avenge this perfidy!*

Nothing, however, could impede the progress of the carnage, which continued for three days. During that lapse of time, sleep was expelled by homicide and terror from the walls of Paris. No sounds were heard but those of rage and despair; heaven, outraged at each succeeding moment, was only invoked by expiring victims; indefatigable and furious slaughter prowled unceasingly, and continued sole despot of that immense city. During the two last days, Paris presented the horrid spectacle of a place given up to assault and abandoned to pillage. An infuriate populace and soldiery, armed with pistols, daggers, pikes, and stakes, scoured the streets, or rushed in crowds from the devastated houses, leaving only the slaughtered bodies, and carrying away, without opposition, jewels, plate, furniture, and viands. Nothing was heard but the discharge of pistols and arquebuses, the dashing of stones and missiles against the casements and houses, mingled with the cries and groans of the wounded and dying, or the blasphemous imprecations and howlings of the murderers. The streets were scattered over with mangled limbs; hotels, palaces, and public buildings were reeking with blood; the image of death and desolation reigned on every side, and under the most hideous appearances; in all quarters carts were seen loaded with plunder, while others contained heaps of bodies, destined to be cast into the river, whose waters were for several days sullied by tides of human gore.

During this horrid period, every species of the most refined cruelty became exhausted; the weakness of infancy proved no impediment to the impulse of ferocity: children of ten years, exercising the first homicidal deed, were seen committing the most barbarous acts, and cutting the throats of infants in their swaddling clothes! The venerable Brion, upwards of eighty years of age, and governor of the prince de Conti, finding himself surrounded by a band of assassins, seized his young pupil and clasped him in his arms, in the hope of finding in him a safeguard; this proved however of no avail, for the old man was poniarded, in spite of the efforts of the prince, *who, weeping bitterly, stretched forth his little hands in order to ward off the daggers of the inhuman assailants.* François de Caumont, sleeping between his two little sons, was stabbed with the eldest; the second only escaping by counterfeiting death, and concealing himself under the bleeding bodies of his father and brother. The marquis of Revel, running in his shirt to the banks of the Seine, and having cast himself into a boat, was killed by a ball from an arquebuse, levelled at him by his cousin Bussi d'Amboise.

Nearly all the illustrious houses of France were compelled to go into mourning in consequence of this sanguinary tragedy. Larochefoucauld, whom, as we have before observed, the king wished to save, Crussol, Teligny, son-in-law of the admiral, Pluviant, Berni, Clermont, Lavardin, Caumont de la Force, Pardaillan, Levi, De Piles, and

a great number of other captains, fell by the daggers of the assassins. Some few escaped; among whom were, Rohan, Vidame de Chartres, and Montgomery. The king pardoned Grammont, Duras, Gamaches, and Bouchavane; the Guises also spared a few, and the pitiless marshal de Tavannes, who was heard to exclaim, "*Bleed, bleed; the physicians say that it is equally good to be let blood in August as in May,*" nevertheless rescued from death the person of Neufville; and Armand de Gontaut de Biron, who, though a catholic, was accused of favouring the Calvinists, saved his life by fortifying himself in the arsenal. It is somewhat remarkable that among so many valiant warriors, only two of the number of proscribed defended themselves; one was Guerchi, who, with his arm enveloped in his cloak, fought for a long period in the house of the admiral, and was only compelled to yield from superior numbers; the other was Taverny, lieutenant of the Marshalsea, a practitioner of the long robe, who, aided by a single valet, sustained an assault in his own house for nine hours. Had not surprise and terror petrified the courage of all the rest, they might have exterminated their ferocious assailants; since brave warriors, however inferior in numbers, generally obtain the victory over base assassins.

During these disastrous days Providence rescued a child destined at a future period to contribute to the regeneration of France. Young Rosny, at that period twelve years old, was

awakened, during the first day of the massacre, by the sound of the bells, and the confused shoutings of the populace. His preceptor and *valet de chambre* precipitately quitted the hotel in order to ascertain the cause of the tumult, concerning whom not a syllable afterwards transpired, so that there is little doubt but they were among the first victims of the slaughter. Rosny, left alone in his apartment, speedily dressed himself, and, being told by the owner of the hotel the danger that awaited him, resolved to seek refuge in the college of Burgundy, at which seminary he was pursuing his studies. He dressed himself in his student's apparel, and taking a thick volume of catholic prayers under his arm, descended into the street. He was petrified with horror on beholding at every step bands of the enraged populace, crying out, "*Kill, kill, massacre the Huguenots.*" He at length fell amidst a company of guards, by whom he was stopped; but the mass-book, which he carried under his arm, proved a passport, and he was permitted to proceed: twice afterwards he was arrested in his progress, but he had the good fortune to escape the threatened peril by the same simple means. On gaining the college of Burgundy, the porter at first refused him admittance; he then conceived himself lost without resource, when the thought suddenly struck him of enquiring for the superior of the college, a virtuous ecclesiastic, named La Faye, who took charge of him, and kept him concealed in his closet for

three days, whither that respectable priest, the worthy representative of the Evangelists, conveyed food to him every morning and night. An order at length having appeared, prohibiting farther slaughter and pillage, young Rosny was liberated from his hiding-place, and confided to the custody of the king of Navarre.

Among the various traits of barbarity that disgraced this murderous festival, historians have only preserved one truly noble and generous deed, which nevertheless carries with it a stamp of the ferocity that characterized the period in question. Vezins, a gentleman of Querci, had been for a length of time on very bad terms with one of his neighbours, named Regnier, a Calvinist, whose death he had an hundred times vowed to accomplish: both these individuals happened to be at Paris at the fête of Saint Bartholomew; and Regnier trembled, lest Vezins, profiting by the circumstance, should satiate, at the expense of his life, the inveterate hatred which he entertained towards him. While overcome by these terrors, the door of his chamber was forced open, and Vezins entered, sword in hand, accompanied by two soldiers. "*Follow me*," said he, addressing Regnier, in a harsh and authoritative tone; the latter, palsied with apprehension, placed himself between the two guards, not doubting but death was to prove his lot; Vezins then caused him to mount on horseback, and speedily hurried from the city without stopping or pronouncing a syllable, when he proceeded direct to his castle at

at Querci. "*Here you are in safety,*" said Vezins; "*I might have taken advantage of the occasion to avenge myself, but with brave men it is necessary to share danger; it is on that account I have saved you. When you think fit, you will find me ready to terminate our quarrel in a manner becoming gentlemen.*" Regnier only replied by uttering protestations of gratitude and supplicating his friendship. "*I leave you at liberty to hate or to love me,*" said the harsh Vezins; "*and I only conducted you hither that you might be placed in a situation to make the choice.*" Without awaiting a reply, he then set spurs to his horse, and immediately disappeared.

The dukes of Guise and Montpensier, and the bastard of Angoulême, promenading through the streets, openly stated that it was the king's will that the very last of this race of vipers should be crushed and killed. Urged on by these exhortations, the bands of armed citizens became furious in abetting the slaughter of their brethren, as had been promised by the provost of the merchants of Paris during his interview with the king and marshal Tavannes; in proof of which, one Crucé, a jeweller, displaying his naked and bloody arm, vaunted aloud that he had cut the throats of more than four hundred Huguenots in one day.

We must not, however, conceive that religion alone sharpened the daggers of the assassins, since many catholics, publicly known as such, perished during the tumult: heirs killed their parents; literary men cut short the career of

those by whom their labours were eclipsed; lovers offered up their rivals as sacrifices to jealousy; riches were construed into a crime; hatred was a legitimate plea for cruelty, and the overwhelming torrent of example swallowed up in its vortex, men formed to instruct others in the precepts of honour and of virtue.

If any examples were necessary to substantiate these facts, we need only refer the reader to La Popeliniere, vol. i. who states that the following, among other individuals of the catholic persuasion, perished from motives of vengeance, hatred, or pique:—Lomenie, secretary of finances; Rouillard, a counsellor of the parliament; Chapes and Robert, two celebrated advocates; Salcede, well known for his quarrels with the family of the Guises; Villemur, nephew of the ancient keeper of the seals; together with a long list of other personages equally conspicuous for their probity and public worth.

Brantome records, that many of his associates, gentlemen by birth like himself, acquired as much as ten thousand crowns by the plunder; and to such an extent was this effrontery carried, that the robbers, without shame, presented themselves at court, offering to the king and queen precious jewels, the fruits of their depredations, which were graciously accepted by their majesties.

Ladies of the court were seen with unblushing countenances scrutinizing the naked dead bodies of their former friends, and endeavouring to find

out, by their licentious observations, subjects calculated to excite risibility.

The impetuous Charles, having once given way to passion, set no bounds to his rage, which so far triumphed over every manly feeling as to urge him to fire, from a balcony of one of the windows of the Louvre in front of the Seine, upon his wretched fugitive subjects. This circumstance is narrated in Brantome, and was further verified by Voltaire, who, in one of the notes to his Henriade, states, that old marshal De Lassé informed him he had known, in his youth, a gentleman aged ninety, who had served Charles the Ninth in the capacity of a page, and that the venerable personage in question had affirmed to the marshal, that he was employed in loading the arquebuse wherewith the king fired upon the populace. In consequence of this anecdote, during the revolution, a board was affixed over the window in question, bearing an inscription to the following effect :—

"*It was from this window the tyrant Charles the Ninth, of sanguinary memory, fired upon his faithful subjects, the unfortunate Huguenots, during the massacre of Saint Bartholomew.*"

During this career of blood, the king did not remain within the walls of his palace, but paraded through the streets of Paris, accompanied by his whole court; a brilliant retinue, which afforded a revolting contrast to the traces of massacre that were legibly imprinted upon all the walls;

and it is further stated, that he went to the place of execution at Montfaucon in order to gaze on the mutilated corpse of Coligny, suspended to the gibbet by the thighs, supported by iron hooks; if such was the fact, the admiral could not have been removed on the night of the murder by marshal Montmorency, as stated by Dangeau.

"*From the period of the 24th of August,*" says Sully, vol. i. "*the king shuddered on hearing the recital of the thousand traits of cruelty narrated to him by those who arrogated to themselves a degree of honour, in his presence, for the active parts they had taken in the slaughter. . . . . Of all those who approached the monarch's person, no one possessed his confidence so completely as Ambrose Paré, a famous Calvinist surgeon, whom Charles preserved by keeping him at the Louvre, although he had previously declared that nothing should compel him to abrogate his faith. The day after the massacre Charles took Paré aside, and began a candid avowal of the horrible anxiety by which his mind was tormented. Ambrose,*" said the king, "*I know not what has occurred to me within these two or three days, but I find my mind and my body agitated, as if I was labouring under a dreadful fever; it seems to me every moment, as well waking as sleeping, that those mangled corpses present themselves to my view with hideous aspects and covered with gore. I sincerely wish that the innocent had not been comprised among the number of the slain.*"

As soon as the king had commanded a cessation of the massacre, he proceeded to meet the

parliament, where he held a court of justice. He then declared that after a thousand attempts, as frequently pardoned, against his sovereign and his country, admiral Coligny had put a climax to his atrocious crimes by resolving to exterminate the royal family and all the princes, consisting of the king, the queen, the dukes of Anjou and Alençon, and the king of Navarre, excepting only the prince of Condé, whom he had designed to place upon the throne, with the intention of afterwards putting an end to him, and assuming in his own person the supreme authority. It does not appear improbable, from the sudden change in Charles's conduct, and the fury that consequently predominated over a weak mind, that he in the first instance believed in the truth of this pretended conspiracy; and when we are led to contemplate the deep duplicity of the queen mother, what testimonies and perjured witnesses may she not have suborned to render the falsehood more feasible? Charles must, however, have been disabused in the end, finding it impossible to substantiate any thing: the crime had, however, been committed, and to stifle the menacing appeals of the most horrid remorse, it was requisite he should seek, if possible, to deceive himself; a dangerous and easy expedient, unfortunately too common with princes. Had there been any particle of truth in this allegation, it ought to have been published on the very eve of the massacre, and not after the lapse of three days, which was the fact; as in such case there

would have been some justification for the excesses committed. Such was the reflection of the president de Thou, who *shuddered at being compelled, from his station as first president of the parliament, to approve in appearance these false motives suggested by his sovereign.* In answer to this we beg to remark that, *no high post or situation whatsoever, can force a man to approve of assassination, and consecrate the same as an act of justice by his public approbation of an execrable crime.*

Charles, in acceding to the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, conceived that all the odium of the transaction would fall upon the Guises, and such was the intent of his first declaration. He was not, however, suffered to continue long in this agreeable error. Cathèrine, who well knew how to turn his susceptible mind, very adroitly placed it between his glory and his authority. Besides the inconvenience that would result from the breaking out of a more inveterate civil war between the Guises and the Montmorencies, the latter of whom were desirous of avenging the death of Chatillon, firmly believing the princess of Lorraine alone culpable ; she gave her son to understand, that to throw the odium of the deed upon others, would be to allow his personal weakness and incapacity ; that in a kingdom nothing should appear to take place without the monarch's consent, that otherwise, he is soon despised, and exposed to witness the overthrow of every thing in his state.

As is customary with characters governed

by extremes, the youthful Charles, once impregnated with these dangerous maxims, no longer showed any respect for moderate measures; and he in consequence publicly authorised all the massacres that were committed in the provinces. These proved horrible beyond expression; at Meaux, Angers, Bourges, Orleans, Lyons, Toulouse, and Rouen, without enumerating the smaller towns, villages, and even private castles, the lords of which were not always in safety against the effervescence of popular fury.

Mandelot, governor of Lyons, having ascertained that some Huguenots had escaped the slaughter of their butchers, after four thousand citizens had been slain, caused them to be pursued and arrested, and then strove to prevail upon the public executioner to put an end to them. This man, however, refused, alleging that he was no assassin, only exercising his ministry in the name of the Law and by order of Justice; an answer and a mode of proceeding very remarkable in an individual exercising such a function, and under the reign of a prince who had himself become the executioner of his people! As a proof of the horrid state of things at that period, a butcher, who had particularly signalized himself during this slaughter by the number of Huguenots he had murdered, was rewarded by receiving an invitation to dine at the legate's table, when he subsequently passed through that city.—*(Abridgment of the Chro. Hist. of Lyons.)* Dead bodies rotted in the open fields

for want of burial, and several streams became so infected with the putrid corpses that were committed to their currents, that those inhabiting the banks of the rivers would not, during a great length of time, drink of the waters, nor partake of the fish wherewith they abounded.

Let us add, for the satisfaction of the reader, who must be sickened with such a catalogue of horrid enormities, that the commanders of some of the provinces refused to lend themselves to the execution of such revolting and sanguinary orders. Count de Tendes in Provence, Gorde in Dauphiny, Chabot Charni in Burgundy, Saint Heran in Auvergne, and De la Guiche at Macon, are names that deserve to be handed down with honourable mention to posterity. Jean Hennuyer, a jacobin monk and bishop of Lisieux, obtained from the governor to whom the orders of the court were addressed, that he would for a time delay the execution of the massacre; and by this wise step he saved all the Calvinists of his city and diocese. Viscount d'Ortho, commander of Bayonne, also wrote to the king to the following effect:

"*Sire, I have communicated your majesty's order to your faithful inhabitants and the troops constituting the garrison of this city. I found nothing but good citizens, and brave soldiers, but not a single executioner; it is on this account that they and myself most humbly supplicate your majesty to be pleased to employ our arms and lives to accomplish deeds that are possible; and however hazardous they may be, we will for*

their accomplishment expend the last drop of our blood."

From circumstances such as the above, we are at length enabled to breathe, finding that humanity was not wholly extinct in the human breast; the sudden deaths, however, of viscount d'Ortho and count de Tendes, have led to a surmise that their noble generosity was recompensed by poison.

No massacre took place at Senlis, and De Thou, lib. 52, even amidst the general joy does honour to this reservedness on the part of the Montmorencies, to whom Chantilly belonged. He conjectures that the marshal repaired expressly to Senlis, to save the Calvinists: whereas Mallet and Vautier, two inhabitants of the town and ocular witnesses, who have left a journal of every transaction that occurred at that period, make no mention of the marshal's having been present. They merely state that from orders expedited from Paris against the Huguenots, under date of the 24th August, being that of Saint Bartholomew, the inhabitants assembled, and struck with horror at the idea of shedding the blood of their fellow citizens, merely enjoined the reformers to retire peaceably from the city, which accordingly took place without noise or tumult. From this it should seem that the safety of the Calvinists was rather due to the humanity of the inhabitants, than to the interference of a stranger.

It is a fact worthy recording that all the governors of cities who proved favourable to the

Huguenots experienced no one obstacle in the execution of their liberal and courageous resolutions. It appears that their humanity triumphed without any effort over the resentments of private individuals and the hatred of the people. Such is the power of good example in those delegated to command. It is just that they should be answerable for the evil, since their conduct, their manners, and their conversations, are always capable of producing good. If they are worthy to be respected, it is easy for them to awaken generous sentiments in the minds of those they are bound to control; but it is virtue alone that can create in them that happy and sublime ascendency.

Marshal De Tavannes only calculates those slaughtered at Paris at two thousand; but the testimony of one of the principal authors of that horrid deed is to be suspected: it appears certain that the number amounted to between six and seven thousand, comprising the catholics, whom hatred, vengeance, or mistakes, enumerated in the proscription. Several authors affirm that there perished in all, at Paris and in the provinces, about forty thousand souls. The duke de Sully, so faithful in his recitals and so impartial in his decisions, affirms that the number of victims extended to sixty thousand; and there is little doubt but the fact was as he has stated.

Terror gave rise to some conversions in religious tenets, most of which continued only during the impulse of fear. This motive however did not

produce a similar effect in all; on the contrary, Henry de la Tour d'Auvergne, viscount Turenne, says, that the horror of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew urged him to become a Calvinist. A final triumph was necessary to the court, and so many atrocities had become of no utility, if those who approached nearest to the throne had persisted in their obstinacy. Every day chosen theologians catechised the king of Navarre and the prince of Condé; their friends added exhortations, prayers, and even menaces; and, if Calvinist historians are to be credited, they had even the address to forbear the abjuration of a famous minister, named Durosier, in the hope that such an example would gain the princes over; but they continued to procrastinate under the pretext of still requiring more ample instruction.

Wearied with these delays, Charles the Ninth, during one of his fits of rage, ordered his arms to be brought, that the regiment of guards should range themselves round him, and that the princes might be led to his presence. Upon this occasion we find that the queen mother, urged by that demoniac mind which so frequently swayed her conduct, caused Henry to pass unarmed beneath the narrow vaultings of a long passage, having soldiers ranged on either side like two hedge rows, *and placed in the attitude of intended massacre.* On beholding this spectacle, which appeared as the prelude of a new scene of blood, Henry shuddered and fell back some paces. Nançay la Chatre, captain of the guard de corps, upon this swore solemnly

to the prince that his life should not be attempted; and although Henry placed little reliance on these assurances, he marched forward, and in this manner passed amidst a forest of levelled carbines and halberds, frequently grazing their points as he proceeded along. Young queen Margaret, urged by tenderness and humanity, on beholding the armed force with which Charles the Ninth, her brother, was accompanied, and sensibly touched for the situation of her husband, threw herself upon her knees before the king, and by supplications prevailed upon him to dismiss the numerous body guards who attended his person. Yet, although softened in some measure, he received the young princes with a menacing aspect, exclaiming in tones of thunder, as we are informed by Anquetil, *Death*, the *Mass*, or the *Bastille*; whereto he added with unabated vehemence of temper, that if they did not instantly repair to hear mass, they should be treated as criminals guilty of leze-majesty. The king of Navarre and his sister Catherine of Bourbon yielded. The prince of Condé still continued to manifest some resolution, but at length gave way, as well as his wife Mary of Cleves, and Frances of Orleans his mother-in-law. They all wrote to the Pope, and received absolution through the medium of their uncle the cardinal of Bourbon: Henry was compelled to do more; he ordered the re-establishment of the catholic worship in his dominions, and strictly forbade the exercise of the reformed religion.

By these odious proceedings and apostacies,

to which all the publicity possible was attached, Catherine's iniquitous counsel thought to substantiate the utility of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, and determined therefore to put a finishing stroke to the work of blood, from whence her infernal policy hoped to reap very great advantage. Briquemont a captain, and Cavagne a merchant, both Calvinists, and well acquainted with the proceedings of their party, having escaped the first horrors of the slaughter, were discovered, dragged from their hiding-places, and committed to prison. The court flattered itself that these two individuals, in order to save their lives, would consent to depose all that should be dictated to them concerning the conspiracy of Coligny and the other Calvinist chiefs. Briquemont, who had proved himself so intrepid in combats, only displayed a cowardly pusillanimity in presence of his judges; a certain proof of the different degrees of courage that animate the human soul; and from which we may assert that warlike valour is not a proof that intrepidity is its uniform accompaniment.

Briquemont and Cavagne were condemned to be hung, as attainted and found guilty of all the heinous crimes with which the Calvinists were reproached. In order to save his life, the former first proposed that he would undertake to serve the court against Rochelle, the fortifications of which fortress he had superintended, and consequently was aware of all its weak points. This offer, however, being refused, he

then promised to declare publicly that Coligny and his associates had actually entered into a conspiracy against the king.

Cavagne, his associate in misfortune, on witnessing the trouble of his friend, being attached with him to the same chain, and environed by the ministers of death, fixed upon him a compassionate regard; and after gently chiding him for his dastardly conduct, Briquemont, blushing at his pusillanimity, recalled his former courage to aid him, and resolutely prepared for execution. In this state they were drawn upon hurdles to the place of execution, when the populace, ever willing to adopt the passions their superiors think fit to dictate, loaded them with abuse as public malefactors, covered their persons with filth of every description, and cruelly lacerated their bodies.

They were accompanied by an effigy of the admiral made of straw. Every thing that could be imagined to vilify eternally the name of a man, was accumulated in the act pronounced against his memory. It was therein stated that his effigy, dragged to the place of execution at Montfaucon, should there continue exposed in the most elevated situation; that his family armorial bearings should be dragged at the tails of horses, conducted by public executioners, through all the principal cities of the kingdom; it was thereby strictly enjoined, that every portrait and statue existing of Coligny should be torn up and broken in pieces, wheresoever they

might be found; that his castle of Chatillon sur Loing was to be dismantled in such a manner as to preclude the possibility of its ever being re-established; that the trees should be reduced to four feet in height; that salt should be sown throughout his domains, and that in the centre of his estate a pillar should be raised, and thereon engraved this decree. Lastly, all his property was confiscated; his children declared members of the lowest class of society, and incapacitated from filling any public employment. By this same document a solemn procession was ordered annually, on the festival of Saint Bartholomew, to return thanks to the Almighty for having, on that day, preserved the kingdom from the evil machinations of the heretics.

Notwithstanding, this act, and such violent precautions supported by the sovereign authority, far from producing the effect desired of vilifying the memory of the admiral, it only served, on the contrary, to obliterate his faults from the public mind; because every thing was unprecedented and atrocious in the manner of his murder, and the announcement of this decree. All edicts emanating from the throne only entail disgrace in proportion as they are founded in justice. Posterity has avenged Coligny for so many cruelties and such furious vindictiveness levelled against him, in calling to mind nothing but his great qualities.

Such was the last attack aimed at the memory of the admiral, and the concluding scene of this

melancholy tragedy. Had he indulged less security, this warrior, so prudent in all the other actions of his life, would have spared himself the most dreadful calamities, and France a wound, whose deep gashes disfigured her annals for such a lengthened period. But it is worthy of remark, that in perusing the history of all the troubles that devastated that kingdom, the avenging hand of Omnipotence was visibly stretched forth against those who, fomenting the antipathies and animosities of the people, involved them in wars, the great sources of all atrocious crimes. The first of the Guises fell by the hand of an assassin. Marshal Saint Andre, one of the triumvirate, was also murdered, though upon the field of battle. The first Condé experienced a similar fate. Anthony of Bourbon, king of Navarre, and the constable de Montmorenci, died of their wounds; and, finally, the admiral, his brother cardinal de Chatillon, and a host of the most distinguished nobility professing the two religions, perished in the space of twelve years by every species of death which rage and fury are capable of inventing, in order to satiate the most vindictive vengeance.

Amidst the traps laid to ensnare his steps, and the dangers which incessantly menaced his existence, Coligny uniformly marched forward with an intrepid step to attain the end proposed. He possessed all the qualifications required in the leader of a party, uniting with firmness the talent of persuasion in an eminent degree. As a

general he proved unfortunate, having scarcely ever risked an enterprise without being beaten; but after a defeat his adversaries uniformly found him superior to the frowns of fate, and he appeared as if born to command fortune. When the troops were discouraged, beaten, and dispersed, flying in all directions without bread, clothing, or an asylum, tempted to desertion by money and pardon, Coligny's serene and tranquil air restored their courage. There was not a soldier, who, judging from the boldness of the projects he formed after the most signal reverses, did not imagine him to possess hidden resources capable of repairing every disaster, and who would not consequently attach himself even more firmly to such a leader. There was not a gentleman who, on hearing Coligny detail the motives of his actions, did not regard him as a hero sacrificing himself for the interest of those to whom he addressed his conversation. His delivery was noble, pure, and energetic; a specimen of which is handed to us, in an account of the siege of Saint Quentin, which occurred during his youth. The harangue in question is remarkable for elegance of style, and that phraseology which has so much enriched the French language. Independent of these qualifications, the morals of Coligny were without reproach, nay even carried to a degree of austerity, a virtue most essentially requisite in supporting a war of religion. He was a good husband, an excellent father, but a dark enemy;

his industry was indefatigable, his secrecy impenetrable; he enjoyed boundless credit with his own party, and the highest reputation in foreign countries.

The news of the admiral's death and the massacre were welcomed at Rome with the most lively transports of joy; the cannons were fired, and bonfires were illumined, as for an event of the most important consequence. A solemn mass, called an act of grace, was celebrated, at which pope Gregory the Thirteenth assisted with all the splendour that court is accustomed to bestow upon ceremonies it is anxious to render famous. The cardinal of Lorraine gave a large reward to the courier; and interrogated him upon the subject in a manner that demonstrated he had been previously aware of the intended catastrophe. Brantome tells us that the sovereign pontiff shed tears when he was made acquainted with the melancholy fate of such a multitude of unfortunate fellow-creatures. "*I weep,*" said the Pope, "*for the fate of so many innocent victims, who must doubtless have been confounded with the guilty; but it is possible that the Almighty may have accorded repentance to many of them:*" a sentiment of commiseration, says Anquetil, by no means incompatible with those opposite demonstrations that were excited by policy, while pity claimed from the bottom of the heart the rights of humanity which had been so cruelly perverted.

Upon the occasion of the massacre, a medal was struck at Rome, impressions of which are

still preserved in the cabinets of the curious: on one side is the head of Gregory the Thirteenth, and on the reverse, the exterminating angel striking the Huguenots, some of whom are represented in the act of flight, while others, thrown down, are trampled beneath his feet: this medal bears for inscription, *Hugonotorum Strages*, 1572.

Throughout Germany but one cry resounded on the subject of the barbarities exercised against the French reformers. It was very justly esteemed an execrable slaughter, uniting all the refinements of duplicity, wickedness, and perfidy, which had been separately employed for a succession of ages by the most cruel tyrants. Numerous writings appeared fulminating these reproaches, which were the more acutely felt by the court of France, as it was then occupied in soliciting the crown of Poland for the duke of Anjou, and as this general feeling of disgust on the part of the Germans did not augur favourably for the success of the enterprise. Deputies were in consequence despatched for the purpose of palliating the affair; while apologies were circulated, some excusing the whole transaction, and others merely a part of the massacre; all, however, grounding the necessity for the deed on the admiral's alleged conspiracy as a crime attested by an act of the parliament, and consequently deemed beyond the shadow of a doubt. Yet, notwithstanding all the ingenuity of these palliatives, a disadvantageous sentiment

always prevailed with the Germans in regard to the authors of this flagrant atrocity.

In Spain matters were regarded in a different point of view. Philip the Second, having perused the account transmitted to him by the French court, forwarded the documents to the admiral of Castile, who read the same aloud at his table, where the duke del Infantado was seated. After having heard the account, the youthful prince, with much *naïveté*, enquired, "whether the admiral and his partisans were Christians?"—"*No doubt*," answered the admiral of Castile.—"*How comes it, then*," resumed the duke, "*that being Frenchmen and Christians, they should thus have assassinated one another like monsters?*"—"*Gently, my lord duke*," said the admiral; "*are you not well aware that a war in France constitutes the peace of Spain?*"

Certainly, had Coligny's advice been adopted and Charles the Ninth despatched the Calvinists against the duke of Alva in Flanders, the king of Spain would have been subjected to great danger, whereas, in consequence of the troubles fomented by the Saint Bartholomew massacre, he saw himself eased from all idea of French interference for a length of time, that country being sufficiently occupied in attending to its intestine quarrels. This, however, had been far from the idea entertained by the court of France, which flattered itself, on the contrary, that after such a slaughter of the reformers, like a body drained of blood, it would only languish and

ultimately die of itself. For the purpose of hastening their final overthrow and depriving them of every vestige of authority, Charles, by an edict, dispossessed the Calvinists of all offices, as well of the robe as the sword, without excepting even those who had pronounced abjuration; new events, however, very shortly after called for the adoption of contrary measures.

All the disastrous scenes which had disgraced France did not excite throughout the country, and particularly in Paris, that indignation and horror they were calculated to inspire, even after the first ebullition, and among the higher classes of the community. From the period when the Calvinists had invited foreigners to ravage France, the populace became habituated to assassinations. Violent animosities, and furious resentments, frequently too well founded, authorized in public opinion all the vengeance, those countless duels, and the ambuscades and treasons so uniformly practised. The murders of the prince of Condé and the first duke of Guise did not dishonour their authors: marshal Saint André also fell on the field of honour, but by the hand of an assassin.

National energy had become the most disgusting barbarity; it was almost universally regarded as a praiseworthy fidelity to the party, and an heroic zeal. The intrepid Montluc, so magnanimous in battle, and so devoted to the cause of royalty, mingled with those glorious characteristics a disgusting cruelty which he proudly extols in his Memoirs. The duke of Guise fol-

lowed sword in hand into the antechamber of the king, a gentleman of whom he thought he had cause of complaint. Villequier, the favourite of Henry the Third, stabbed his wife in the Louvre in a state of pregnancy, and on the point of lying-in, merely from effect of jealousy. The lady of Chateau Neuf, says Brantome, deprived her faithless husband of virility. Even gallantry and love savoured of this ferocious sentiment: it was a praiseworthy act, on the first signal of a mistress, to plunge into the river, without knowing how to swim; to come in contact with wild beasts; and to spill your own blood with a poniard. Henry the Third wrote a letter with his blood to a princess of whom he was enamoured; and according to *Mathieu*, the historian, *Souvroy opened and closed the wound, as it became necessary to supply the pen.* Indiscretion and want of delicacy were combined with the softer passions; life was incessantly exposed to gratify and captivate a woman; but her reputation was forfeited, and her dishonour proclaimed without the least scruple.

After the executions of La Mole and Coconnas, of which we shall soon have cause to speak, queen Margaret and the young duchess of Nevers, to whom they had been lovers, caused their heads to be conveyed to them, *bathed them with tears, and embalmed them with their own hands.* A similar violent mode of proceeding was manifested in cases of gratitude and friendship; in short, every sentiment was characterised by the most vehement passions.

Marshal Tavannes, the particular confidant of Catherine de Medicis, seriously proposed to the queen that she would permit him to go and cut off the nose of the duchess of Valentinois, her rival. Catherine, stating in reply that such an action must prove his ruin, he made answer, he was fully aware of the circumstance, but that he would cheerfully forfeit his life to serve her; and the queen found it very difficult to prevent that courtier from testifying this proof of his attachment. The princes of the blood, the Guises, the Montmorencies, and the other chiefs of great houses, separating their interests from those of the country at large, appropriated to themselves creatures solely attached to their own persons. Simple gentlemen piqued themselves on a mad devotion for particular noblemen, whom they denominated their masters. *The being attached* to a prince or an eminent personage, was not then synonimous with receiving a pension or a title; interest constituted no feature in such associations; glory was alone sought in a self-devotion, without reserve, to the particular individual whose character and talents were admired: virtue formed no link in these dangerous engagements; but honour was the uniform guarantee of their fidelity. The same ardour was apparent in cases of friendship; individuals became bound by oaths never to abandon one another, uniformly to adhere to the same party, to share good and ill in common, and, above all, to unite in accomplishing vengeance of whatsoever

nature it might be. The absence of a friend was the signal for mourning; on which occasions, not only was the black costume adopted, but the votary would even deny himself every species of dissipation.

Saint Gelais, during the absence of his friend D'Aubigné, *suffered his hair and beard to grow to an unusual length:* at his return, Henry, on beholding him, said to one of his gentlemen: "*Go and tell Saint Gelais to get himself shaved and have his hair cut, since D'Aubigné his friend is now come back.*" Every thing assumed the spirit of ancient chivalry, degenerated and stripped of those great moral and humane principles which raised their ancestors to such a pinnacle of honour and of glory.

Such were the manners in France under the reigns of Charles the Ninth and Henry the Third; but this effervescence was rather an error and an abuse of energy than a corrupt sentiment. The evil which had apparently attained its acmé, was more appalling than profound; it had no foundation; it did not rely upon false combinations of a perverted mind, and the pride of egotism; the soul, far from being withered, was hurried on by tumultuary passions and an ardent enthusiasm. So many excesses were not the fruits of atheism and impiety. A great king might, with little difficulty, have restored to the nation its true character; and this most desirable event occurred upon the accession of Henry the Fourth to the throne of France.

CHAPTER V.

Result of the massacre of St. Bartholomew.—Lanoue sent to Rochelle.—His arduous post and probity of character.—Peculiar situation of Henry at court.—A predilection for women his only vice.—Siege of Rochelle.—Lanoue summoned to join the royal army.—His character.—Secret projects of the duke of Alençon and Turenne in favour of the Calvinists.—Supplies forwarded by England to Rochelle, productive of little good.—Disorganized state of the royal army.—Favourable terms of peace accorded by Charles the Ninth to the Rochellers.—Departure of the duke of Anjou, elected king of Poland.—Singular malady of Charles the Ninth.—Conspiracy entered into by the duke of Alençon and Montmorency.—Henry superintends Rosny's education.—Intrigues of Margaret, wife of the king of Navarre, with her favourite La Mole.—Plot of Les Jours Gras.—The conspiracy discovered.—Execution of La Mole and Coconnas.—Bodily and mental tortures accompanying the death-bed of Charles the Ninth.—His interview with Henry, and death.—Character of Charles the Ninth.

The first fruits of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew were a civil war. Many Calvinists, who escaped from the murderous weapons of their persecutors, either sought an asylum with faithful friends, or repaired to Montauban, Nîmes, Sancerre—in Vivarais, Rouvergue, and Cevennes, an intersected tract of country very easily defended. The widow and children of admiral Coligny fled to Geneva, while other protestants went to Eng-

land, Switzerland, and Germany, or joined the confederated powers in the Low Countries. Terror in the first instance precluded all hope of their being permitted to continue in France, as they only flattered themselves with the idea of remaining until they could find a more certain asylum. Had they been vigorously followed up in their retreats, not a soul would have escaped; but there was not a single armed corps on foot, and the Huguenots in consequence gradually acquired courage, and implored the protection of their friends. The catastrophe which had dispersed the Calvinists excited in the strongest degree the interest and compassion inspired in the hearts of their avowed and secret partisans; and they were succoured accordingly. Upon this, the reformers soon united, and flew to arms, when the ardent desire of vengeance redoubled their courage; they fortified themselves in several cities, and more particularly in that of Rochelle. The brave Calvinist, Lanoue, a warrior equally intrepid and humane, firmly attached to his party, but abounding in probity and moderation, happened fortunately to be in Hainault at the period of the massacre. Not knowing whither to fly for safety, he addressed himself to the duke of Longueville, his old friend, who wrote to the court in his favour. Lanoue was in consequence invited to Paris, and received with open arms; the king restored to him the property that had been confiscated from Teligny his brother-in-law; after which he was

sent to Rochelle to endeavour to inspire the inhabitants with sentiments of submission and peace. The embassy of Lanoue, which was calculated to excite suspicion in the inhabitants of Rochelle, served, on the contrary, to invest him with the command of that city; and what was still more extraordinary, the king ordered him to accept the trust, to which he acceded, proclaiming aloud, that he should hold the post as minister of his majesty. By this means an individual stood forward, announcing himself as pacificator, while he remained under the royal authority at the head of those who declared war against their sovereign. Lanoue maintained this twofold character of defender of Rochelle, and minister of the court, with an unsullied integrity that excited universal admiration.

As an indefatigable warrior, he employed all his valour, skill, and long experience, in defending the city confided to his care; and when he returned conqueror from an assault or a sortie, it was only to exhort the citizens to accept the peace offered them by his majesty. He frequently experienced reproaches from the ministers of his religion, and the insults of a seditious populace; but never was his integrity called in question, affording a unique example of probity so universally respected as to be coveted with equal confidence by either party, in the most critical moments, and at the period when the greatest animosities existed on both sides.

Rochelle only contained fifteen hundred regular troops, and two thousand inhabitants, accustomed to warfare; but the fortifications were excellent, ammunition and stores of every description existed in abundance, a determined courage inspired even the souls of the female inhabitants, and the certain assurance of succours from England inspirited the garrison and the populace of the city. It was with this force, commanded by five or six brave captains, with Lanoue at their head, under the governance of its municipal council, over which presided Henri Marchand, mayor of the place, and Salvert, a citizen of the highest repute, that Rochelle, which had then assumed the title of a republic, awaited the efforts of a formidable army, under the command of the duke of Anjou, who had been deputed by the queen mother to carry on the siege under the directions of marshal Biron. The duke of Alençon, together with the *élite* of the French nobility, were present, as well as the king of Navarre, the prince of Condé, and many unknown Calvinists, or their partisans, who were compelled by the court to take up arms against their former friends.

Previous to this event, it may be necessary to remark, that the court, fully sensible the change of religion on the part of Henry and the prince of Condé was by no means sincere, caused them to be narrowly watched, in order that they might not effect their escape, which conduct was pursued, not only during the two years that Charles

the Ninth lived, but for a considerable period afterwards.

While suffering this species of bondage, Henry very adroitly concealed the poignant displeasure he felt, masking the chagrin that preyed upon his soul, by a uniform serenity of demeanour, and a gaiety of disposition. This was doubtless the most arduous struggle of his life, for he had to cope with a furious monarch; his two brothers, namely, first, the duke of Anjou, abounding in dissimulation, who had also conspired in the affair of the massacres, and, secondly, the duke of Alençon, equally addicted to duplicity, and of a most malicious temper: to these may be added the queen mother, by whom he was mortally hated, because the soothsayers, whom she frequently consulted, had foretold that he would one day reign; and lastly, the family of Guise, whose power and credit were almost beyond bounds.

Under these considerations, says Perefixe, the greatest caution was necessary in the prince to conduct himself so prudently with individuals of such characters as not to give occasion for jealousy, and at the same time excite their esteem in regard to himself: it was requisite to combine submission and gravity, and preserve his dignity with his life. Notwithstanding this, Henry mastered all these difficulties, and escaped every peril with a facility almost unexampled.

He contracted a great familiarity with the

duke of Guise, who was nearly of the same age, and they attended their secret pleasurable parties together. He did not, however, so well agree with the duke of Alençon, who possessed a capricious temper; and on this account he paid little attention to his enmity, because the king and queen mother entertained no affection for the duke. Henry however would not follow the evil advice of the emissaries of Catherine, who used their utmost endeavours to produce a duel between those two princes; for, independent of the consideration that the duke was the king's brother, to whom he owed respect, he was equally aware that such a step would have been productive of dangerous consequences, as the queen mother would not have failed to profit by such a measure in order to accomplish his ruin.

By this means the prince, generally speaking, escaped the toils laid by Catherine to ensnare him; though not altogether, as he yielded himself to the seductions of certain young ladies of the court, who, it is said, were expressly employed by the queen for the amusement of the princes and noblemen, in order that she might thus acquire a knowledge of their secrets. The policy of Catherine was so well known by every body, that it is impossible to deny this truth, even were we willing, unless the records of those times were to be buried in oblivion.

From that period, continues Perefixe, as the vices contracted in opening youth generally

accompany men to their graves, a passion for women constituted the great weakness and predilection of our Henry, and was perhaps the source of his last calamity; for God, sooner or later, punishes those who blindly yield themselves up to that criminal propensity.

With the exception of this fault, Henry contracted no other vices in the court of Charles; and we may attribute to a peculiar grace on the part of the Divinity, that he was not completely ruined in such a school; for never was there more vicious and corrupt impiety, atheism, magic, nay even the most disgusting and filthy depravity, with base cowardice and perfidy, since poisonings and assassinations reigned there in a sovereign degree. All these abominations, far from infecting the prince, increased the natural horror he entertained for such vices; and in respect to associating with the wicked, he never indulged a thought of becoming their companion, but uniformly proclaimed himself their foe.

Speaking of Henry's presence at the siege of Rochelle, Perefixe remarks: we may judge what a heart-rending circumstance it must have proved to the prince, on being thus made the instrument for the overthrow of those who remained his faithful servants and friends, and had sought an asylum from persecution in that city.

The siege was opened in form at the commencement of February in 1573, and during its continuance the assaults and sorties were

mingled with negotiations and conferences, which did not prevent the persons assisting at such discussions from fighting with a desperation bordering on fury. The inhabitants of Rochelle defended themselves with determined bravery; notwithstanding which they would certainly have failed in their efforts had there been any thing like system pursued in the catholic army; whereas every movement was effected by chance: one day an attack was made on this side of the town, and on the following operations were completely reversed; while the officer was as unacquainted with order and discipline as the common soldier. In addition to this, no secrecy was observed in the deliberations; an assault was always published prior to its execution; every one hurried thither in disorder, not only without a leader, but in opposition to the prayers and against the general's peremptory orders: the consequence was the loss of many men, particularly from among the youthful nobility of the higher classes, without reaping any beneficial results. The duke of Aumale, of the house of Guise, to whom had been confided the detail of the siege, fell at the commencement of operations, and was replaced by the duke of Nevers. The besieged had also the satisfaction of witnessing the death of Cosseins, one of the admiral's assassins, and many others who had signalized themselves during the horrors of Saint Bartholomew.

The joy inspired by the brilliant successes of the Rochellers was, however, damped by the re-

treat of Lanoue. The duke of Anjou, perceiving that his efforts to bring about a peace were unavailing, summoned that brave captain to quit the city: the latter, a zealous Calvinist and a faithful subject, as we have before stated, abandoned with infinite pain a population most dear to him; he harangued the Rochellers, and his conclusive words breathed the language of peace. He was even touched to tears and sobs; but he obeyed the mandate, and repaired to the royal army to fight against the Calvinists with all the ardour and loyalty he had previously manifested in their defence. Lanoue was poignantly regretted throughout the city, not only without a single complaint being raised against him in consequence of such singular conduct, but carrying with him the esteem and affection of all those whom fortune and his duty urged him to declare his enemies. The life of this great man affords an incontestable proof that there are no difficulties which a reputation without blemish, profound wisdom, and sterling virtue, can prevent from obtaining the confidence of the most mistrustful; and that it is possible to retire with glory from perilous and embarrassing positions; an admirable triumph which never accompanies artifice and duplicity.

Francis de Lanoue was surnamed *Bras de Fer*, Iron Arm, in consequence of having one of those limbs shattered, which he caused to be replaced by a false one made of iron. He was killed at the siege of Lambale in Brittany, at the age of

seventy. Being desirous of inspecting the works too near, he ascended a ladder placed against the breach; when he received such a violent blow upon the head that he fell backwards, but continued hooked by his feet to the steps of the ladder: he expired ten days after this accident. The king was sensibly afflicted at his loss, and honoured his memory by pronouncing this panegyric: "He was a great warrior," said the monarch, "but still greater for his virtues; and we cannot sufficiently regret that the attack of a small castle should have proved the death of a man whose merits rendered him well worthy a whole province." Lanoue was fond of letters, and uniformly cultivated them in spite of the war; and we may add, to the glory of science, that all the celebrated warriors addicted to study have uniformly proved humane and generous.

We have previously observed, that the duke of Alençon had entertained a particular affection for admiral Coligny; nor did he conceal that sentiment even after his tragic death: in consequence of which the duke had many partisans among the old friends of the admiral, and in particular the youth of that party, who, alive to the claims of renown and valour, regretted in the death of Coligny the most experienced captain of his age; and one of whose zealous admirers was Henri de la Tour d'Auvergne, viscount Turenne. This nobleman was then only seventeen; yet at so tender a period of life he proved himself equally addicted to arms and formed for intrigue. Tu-

renne advocated the party of the duke of Alençon; and being nearly of the same age, they felt inflamed with the desire of signalizing themselves by some extraordinary enterprise.

We can scarcely attribute to any thing but youthful effervescence the chimerical project which they at length conceived, acting like discontented children, who imagine that by showing spite and threatening to abandon the paternal roof, they would inevitably attain all they desired. Urged by these ideas, the duke and Turenne fancied that they had only to possess themselves of some strong place, such as Angoulême or Saint Jean d'Angeli, to unfurl their banners, bid the trumpets sound, and that immediately all the sectarians would flock to their *rendezvous;* or that, in case of failure, they might seek refuge in England, and that such a daring project would cause a revolt throughout the kingdom. Independent of this they had many other projects in view; namely, taking possession of the royal fleet to join the besieged, forming a body of troops consisting of the secret advocates of the Calvinists in the very heart of the camp, and falling with that force upon the residue of the royal army. The king of Navarre and the prince of Condé very feebly supported these daring attempts, owing to their want of solidity, as well as from a dread of being betrayed by persons so wanting in stability as those who were admitted into the confidence of the young prince. They did not, however, wholly discard the idea, fear-

ful of extinguishing a flame which might be ultimately employed to greater advantage. The confederates, however, not agreeing between themselves, resolved to consult Lanoue upon the subject. He listened to their arguments, weighed well their reasons; and, after having placed before them the inconveniences and the dangers attendant on the enterprise, prevailed upon them to abandon the project altogether.

About the middle of April 1573, the expected supplies arrived from England. The fleet was commanded by Montgomery; which was of inferior force to that of the king; and, in consequence, he did not dare risk an engagement. Of the whole convoy only one vessel, charged with powder, entered the port of Rochelle; but the besieged were in great want of that necessary article of war. Charles the Ninth, who had just signed a treaty of alliance with Elizabeth, bitterly complained of this breach of faith: to which she replied, by declaring her total ignorance of the whole proceeding; that the armament consisted of a troop of banished men and pirates, who had put to sea without her privacy or consent; that she had no interest in the undertaking; and that, in case they could be stopped in their attempts, she should conceive they deserved severe punishment. The fleet, however, having stood out for open sea, cruized on the coast of Brittany; when Montgomery made known to the besieged that he should return to England,

and would shortly set sail again with a more formidable armament and supply.

There was, however, no necessity for this measure, since every thing languished in the royal army: the officers and soldiers displayed neither ardour nor emulation, being in want of a chief. The duke of Anjou manifested, during this siege, that characteristic trait which proved so detrimental to him at a future period; namely, a complete negligence in regard to all that displeased him, however essential it might be to his interests; and an eagerness bordering upon passion for every thing he esteemed, however useless. He had planned the expedition against Rochelle, and his honour was compromised in the advantageous termination of an enterprise attended with so much publicity; but no sooner had he learned that the negotiations entered into for acquiring the crown of Poland had taken a happy turn, than he seemed to forget every project tending to the interest of France. Nothing was then spoken of at his court but the delights of his new kingdom, its riches, the magnificence of its nobles, and the docility of the people. Every topic unconnected with these ideas was disregarded; and the consequence was, no regular plans of attack, and a want of necessary supplies for the support of the troops. A scarcity, resulting from this neglect, soon oppressed the soldiery; and, to complete the misfortune, an epidemic disorder spread throughout the army, which was productive of the most dreadful consequences.

The Rochellers knew well how to profit by these disastrous circumstances: in proportion as they observed a want of energy on the part of their assailants, the more they redoubled their activity; and their eyes were open to every thing that transpired. Emissaries frequently issuing from the camp, under various pretexts, endeavoured to create factions in the city; but these clandestine movements were always discovered by the magistrates, and punished in the most exemplary manner, as well on the citizen as the stranger. From the commencement of the siege the Rochellers had been offered liberty of conscience and personal safety. During five months the negotiations were a thousand times renewed; but the besieged continued obstinate, and would not come to terms, unless they were permitted to treat in the name of the whole Calvinist party. At length it was decided that this point should be acceded to; and for that purpose the duke of Anjou invited to his camp deputies from Nîmes and Montauban, who conferred with those of Rochelle.

This condescension was the result of reiterated orders from Charles the Ninth, who, finding his resources exhausted, his army perishing, and all the forces of his kingdom kept in check by a single city, despatched courier after courier, with orders to ratify a peace, be the conditions what they might. The Rochellers, in consequence, obtained free exercise of religion for themselves, the inhabitants of Nîmes and Mont-

auban, and for the lords of the high justiciary; who might not have abjured. It was also stipulated, that no one should be molested on the score of religious opinions, or promises of abjuration; that all who had taken up arms in support of the cause—namely, the inhabitants of those three cities—should be reinstated in their possessions and honours, and recognised as faithful subjects of the king.

It was pretended that the shame of these conditions was modified, in consequence of some clauses freely entered into by the Rochellers; who thereby agreed, that certain individuals, chosen from among the besieged, should repair to supplicate the duke of Anjou, as representative of the king, to pardon the past; that they consented to receive a governor; and that the three cities should, for the space of two years, send four deputies to court as hostages for the fidelity of their fellow-citizens. All these conditions were expressed in the edict of pacification. The Rochellers considered these points very lightly, as well as reports then disseminated that the king had only accorded them such advantageous terms, in consideration of his brother the duke of Anjou being elected king of Poland, whose departure was consequently required without delay. Peace was ratified on the 6th of July, 1573; and Biron, named governor of Rochelle, entered the city in order to publish the same; on which occasion a splendid repast was prepared; and at night he returned to the camp.

The siege of Rochelle cost France forty thousand men, and incalculable treasures; so that the kingdom was more completely exhausted after an eight months' war, than from the effects of all the preceding struggles. After the raising of the siege Henry returned to Paris, or was rather reconducted thither; while the duke of Anjou, to the great regret of France, set forward to take possession of the kingdom of Poland.

The chief instrument in causing the election of the duke of Anjou to the throne of that country, after the demise of Sigismond the Second, was Montluc, bishop of Valence; who did not succeed without great difficulty, owing to the prejudices that had gone abroad respecting the connexion of that prince with the massacre of Saint Bartholomew. The other pretenders to the crown of Poland, supported by the German protestants, did not fail to lay every stress upon that crying grievance; but the queen mother, who heartily desired the success of the enterprise, effected so much through the medium of bribery and promises, that she carried her point.

It is said that this anxiety on the part of Catherine was owing to the prediction of those astrologers she habitually consulted, who, casting the horoscope of her children, had foretold that they would all become kings. Consequently, not calculating upon the duke of Anjou inheriting the French crown, then in possession of a youthful prince, whose wife already gave signs of fecundity, Catherine was anxious to procure for

him a foreign diadem. Others have stated, that, seeing the want of unanimity that existed between Charles the Ninth and his brother, the queen seized that glorious opportunity of sparing her son Henry, whom she idolized, the vexations to which he might otherwise have been subjected.

Without, however, searching for motives, it was but natural that Catherine, from affection for her son, should endeavour to place a crown upon his head. Nor is it more surprising that seeing Charles the Ninth, at the moment of his brother's departure, seized by a malady whose first symptom announced a speedy dissolution, she should have invented every species of delay to retain in France that favoured child, who she foresaw would speedily be called to occupy the throne of his brother.

It was, however, necessary to depart: when Charles splendidly entertained the Polish ambassadors, and ordered festivities, at which the two monarchs appeared with a grace and majesty that enchanted those strangers. The French king neglected nothing that could tend to embellish the entrance of his brother into his new kingdom; and so great was his anxiety to witness his departure, that it was surmised he felt impatience on this subject in proportion as the inroads of his malady became more confirmed.

Charles conducted the duke of Anjou, on his route to Germany, as far as Vitry in Champaign: but the queen, with the major part of the court, proceeded to Lorraine. Every one remarked

how much it cost Catherine to separate from her darling son. She clasped him in her arms; and scarcely had she quitted him, than she recommenced her caresses, and bathed his face with her tears. Some courtiers, who chanced to be nearest upon this occasion, heard her accompany the last adieu with these words: "*Go, my son; you will not be absent long:*" a prognostic which gave rise to numerous reflections after subsequent events.

Speaking of the extraordinary illness of Charles the Ninth, Perefixe says, that he fell mortally sick in the wood of Vincennes, the blood issuing from every aperture of his body; so that it was conjectured he had been poisoned. Whatever was the cause, (if we may be permitted to judge of kings who are amenable to the Almighty,) it was a divine punishment for his blasphemies, and perhaps on account of the torrents of blood he had caused to be shed.

Cayet, D'Aubigné, Brantome, and Bassompier, all concur in stating that there scarcely exists an example of so melancholy a fate as that experienced by Charles the Ninth. From the earliest moments of reason, his life was one unvarying scene of alarms: he was attacked by four conspiracies, which sufficiently bore the stamp of reality to keep his soul in a state of perplexity more overwhelming than even the attempt itself. Attacked by a mortal disorder, and finding himself on the point of being cut off in the flower of his age, instead of consola-

tions, which are usually offered to the unfortunate, he experienced nothing but indifference on the part of his nearest connexions; plots were hatched in the bosom of his court, his people were rebellious, and he was a prey to every species of mental torture, which gave rise to this couplet of Voltaire:

"*Dieu déployant sur lui sa vengeance sévere,*
Marqua ce roi mourant, du sceau de sa colère."

TRANSLATION.

Omniscience against him display'd vengeance dire,
For this monarch in death bore the stamp of his ire.

Charles imagined he beheld spectres: the most appalling dreams made him start from his slumbers; his gangrened imagination presented torrents of blood and heaps of livid bodies to his view; his ears were assailed with imaginary groans, and plaintive accents seemed to swell upon the breeze. It was remarked, that after the affair of Saint Bartholomew his character underwent a complete change: from *gracious* and *benign*, he became sombre and ferocious; the impatience and violence of temper, to which he had ever been subject, augmented in a dreadful degree: when alone, he was heard to sigh deeply,—raising his eyes to heaven, and appearing to nourish a corroding melancholy in his heart, which rendered his life a complete burthen. Without seeking to annex another crime to the character of the queen mother, it may with justice be said, that remorse and chagrin were the

poisons that hastened the premature death of Charles; and, under this impression, he was certainly more estimable than the other authors of the massacre, who never testified the least contrition for such a deed of blood.

Every thing in France, while announcing the ratification of a general peace, at the same time gave token of the direst troubles and commotions. Disunion reigned between Catherine and her children, a spirit of faction existed among the nobility, the people were dissatisfied; smothered complaints, open plunder, no surety on the high roads, a want of police in the cities, stagnation of commerce—in short, all the disorders of anarchy, under a monarch worn out with suffering, wearied of life, and not knowing in whom to confide, led him frequently to intrust his affairs to persons whose interest it was to embroil them still farther.

The king's increasing distemper, says Perefixe, gave birth to a league entered into by the duke of Alençon, marshals Montmorency and De Cossé, and some catholics, in conjunction with the Huguenot party, to dispossess the queen mother of her authority, and expel the Guises from court, where they continued in great power. Henry of Navarre entered into this conspiracy, not from a wish to associate with the individuals concerned, but merely to compass the means of retiring in safety to his own country. The court was uniformly subject to the twofold agitation produced from public occurrences:

the artifices of the queen mother, and the restless disposition of those in power. Henry, uniformly detained against his will in this corrupt asylum, only enjoyed at intervals an appearance of liberty. He was in general closely watched and guarded like a criminal; sometimes his own attendants were permitted to approach and serve him, and on a sudden they received imperious orders never to enter his presence.

Henry, in the person of his wife Margaret, neither found an active and discreet friend, nor a partner without reproach. In the midst of so much bitterness and harassing contrarieties of every description, he had too frequently recourse to gallantry; nor were means wanting to indulge such a propensity in so licentious a court, where the policy of Catherine, as we have before observed, made intrigues subservient to her purposes. This predilection, which lasted two years, produced an unfortunate influence on the mind of Henry, that subsequently contributed to tarnish the lustre of his character. If, however, he had the misfortune to yield to these dangerous seductions, he did not pass his time in disgraceful sloth. His great soul and active mind required solid and serious occupations; and these he sought in study and constant reading. He had still near his person the same Florentine Christian who had been deputed to watch over his education; and from that able man he daily received lessons in mathematics, geography, and history, of which the young

baron Rosny also partook. Henry was seven years older than that youth, being born on the 13th of December, 1553; and the former on the 13th of that month in 1560: so that both saw the light on the same day of the same month. The king of Navarre, who had taken the entire charge of Rosny's education, seriously occupied himself in perfecting the same; and thus proved the real tutor of that man who was destined to become at a future period, and upon so many occasions, the vigilant mentor and severe censor of his actions. Henry presided over his lessons: he regularly followed their progress; and, according to the Memoirs of Sully, *exacted from him that he should read and write every day: he watched over those exercises that were necessary to give grace to his body; to which he added a still greater attention in the formation of his character and morals: he brought him up as he had himself been reared:*"—and it will be found in the sequel that he was prodigal of his paternal cares, even amidst the tumult of camps and of battles.

The ardent temperament of the duke of Alençon, and his thirst for the attainment of glory, without consulting justice in its acquirement, urged him on to forward the views of the League. He had seen his brother the duke of Anjou at the head of armies, and he was desirous of commanding in turn. The duke had been appointed lieutenant-general of the kingdom, and that was a sufficient plea for his brother's requiring a similar honour. These ideas were no less suggested

to his mind by able adherents; the Calvinists on the one hand, and the Montmorencies and their partisans on the other: that is to say, all the discontented on account of the Bartholomew massacre, who were delighted at being able to act under sanction of the name of the king's brother. In order to spur on this young prince, already too prone to restlessness, they made use of the credit obtained over his mind by Joseph de Boniface, lord of Mole, his favourite, equally imprudent with his master, and the count of Coconas, one of those persevering Italians who had sought to acquire fortune in France under shadow of the favour enjoyed by his nation during the government of Catherine de Medicis. Persons of all ranks entered into this association; young men, women; and even one Grandri, an alchemist, called *the magnificent promiser*, who was to transmute silver into gold, and furnish far more than was required to answer every emergency of the enterprise. This cabal assumed the name of *policy*, or the *malcontents*. The conferences which took place upon this occasion were sometimes held in the apartment of the queen of Navarre, and at others in the residence of madame de Sauve, an expert coquet, who captivated hearts without enslaving her own. Such meetings, however, were not confined to discussions respecting the interests of the party, but frequently served only as a veil to conceal other intrigues; the intent of which was in many instances rendered by far too apparent.

It is stated that Charles the Ninth, scandalized on witnessing the indecencies committed under his own eyes in the palace of the Louvre, between his sister Margaret, wife of Henry, and her lover La Mole, was desirous of inflicting justice with his own hands; for which purpose he distributed to the duke of Guise and other confidants some ropes, for the purpose of strangling the audacious offender when he should issue forth at night from the apartment of the young queen. La Mole, however, either acquired timely notice of his danger, or chanced to remain till daylight with his mistress, by means of which delay he was saved. Coconas, another friend of the League, whom we have previously mentioned, was the lover of the duchess of Nemours, mother of the duke of Guise; while the duke of Alençon and the king of Navarre disputed the conquest of madame de Sauve, without, however, suffering that circumstance to interrupt for any length of time their political amity.

If, however, any coolness in consequence took place between the princes, Margaret, in the character of a kind wife and an affectionate sister, very generously exerted her efforts to restore amity. This princess, equally unstable as her brother the duke of Alençon, would one day maintain inviolable secrecy, and on the next, yielding to terror, confide to her mother the grand secret of her husband, her cousin, the prince of Condé, and her brother the duke of

Alençon, being on the eve of retiring from court to join the Calvinists and recommence a civil war. In consequence of these disclosures the whole party was narrowly watched, and their measures frustrated; but afterwards, when the queen relied most upon the confessions of her daughter, the latter would not utter a syllable, and thus those plots were consolidated which were frequently only discovered by means of the hasty explosion of a plan badly preconcerted.

Such, we find in the Life of Mornay, p. 26, was the result of the famous enterprise undertaken at the beginning of Lent in 1574, called the plot of *Les Jours Gras;* upon which occasion the court was so intimidated that orders were issued for its quitting Paris without a moment's delay: on which occasion D'Aubigné draws a ludicrous picture of the disorder that attended this removal: "*The cardinals of Lorraine, Bourbon, Guise, the chancellor Birague, Morvilliers, and Bellievre,*" says our authority, "*were all mounted upon Italian coursers, grasping their saddle-bows with both hands, and as much afraid of their horses as their enemies.*" But if the panic excited in these prelates and men of the robe afforded an amusing spectacle, the situation of Charles the Ninth was such as to excite real commiseration. He was transported from the palace on a litter, after two o'clock in the morning; and while suffering anguish from illness, and being also exposed at such an unseasonable hour, he cried in tones expressive of mental and bodily suffering, "*At least they might have awaited my dissolution!*"

The queen mother having discovered the plot, ordered the king of Navarre and the duke of Alençon to be arrested, over whom a guard was appointed; marshals Montmorency and Cossé were sent to the Bastille; the prince of Condé and Thoré fled first into Picardy, and from thence were lucky enough to escape to Germany. Several gentlemen, accused of having participated in these intrigues, and amongst others La Mole, favourite of the duke of Alençon, and Coconnas, were arrested; when the duke, like a timid child, had the weakness to make a disclosure of every thing to Catherine, and, in order to excuse his own fault, implicated all his friends. The king of Navarre, fully acquainted with that prince's character, having learned that he was closeted with the queen mother, said to the duke of Bouillon, "*Our man tells every thing.*" The queen was desirous that Henry should be interrogated by the grand chancellor; where he supported the dignity of his rank with admirable firmness, braved all the menaces uttered against him, and proudly maintained that he was not amenable to any one, but enabled to give wholesome advice, which was not required of him: when in presence of Catherine and the council, he pronounced a very long and severe harangue concerning the disorders that agitated the kingdom, and the absolute necessity there was for applying some efficient remedy; he only spoke in general terms, neither naming nor charging any individual in particular. This un-

daunted conduct commanded even the admiration of those whom it was calculated to irritate, and no violent steps were taken either against him or the French marshals who had been consigned to the Bastille. Others, however, of less note, were subjected to various punishments; while La Mole and Coconnas were condemned to suffer.

It was absolutely necessary to prove a crime; for the mere design of swaying the conduct of the princes of the court, was not a sufficient plea in the eyes of the public, more ready to pardon than condemn the errors of youth. Endeavours were consequently set on foot to discover in the plot some proof of a direct conspiracy against the person of the king; but this attempt proved futile. "*Poor wretch that I am!*" exclaimed La Mole, while suffering agonies from the torture, "*is there no means then of procuring pardon? The duke, my master, who has before obliged me a thousand times, ordered me, on my life, never to utter a syllable respecting his intentions: to which I replied—Yes, sir, provided nothing is undertaken against his majesty.*" This was the uniform assertion of all the conspirators. There is every reason to conjecture that the secret intent of this intrigue was to prevent the return of the king of Poland, and to place the duke of Alençon upon the throne after the death of Charles the Ninth. Doubtless they were not willing to unmask too much of the mystery to the dying monarch, already suffering sufficient, and who needed no

additional cruelty to augment the horrors of the tomb that was yawning to receive him.

La Mole and Coconnas were condemned to be beheaded; and when on the road to execution, the former, as if anxious to give posterity the only solid advice that might be drawn from this transaction, said to the populace and courtiers present at the execution, "*Gentlemen, you perceive that the little are caught, while the great remain, who were guilty of the fault.*"

While so many projects, and the hopes of ambition, gave rise to such numerous secret cabals at court, the unfortunate Charles the Ninth, neglected by his relatives, abandoned by the courtiers, and shut up in a solitary apartment, approached the last moments of his miserable existence. This young monarch, born with courage, an active and brilliant mind, and great qualifications, was, from the horror of just remorse, the most deplorable victim of the cruel massacre which he had commanded. That monarch who is capable of renouncing the sacred and endearing title of father of his people, in order to become their murderer, performs a dreadful abdication! he only contemplates in that immense family which he betrayed with so much inhumanity, an host of irreconcilable foes; he has no more children; he is bereft of country; he weeps and moans in vain; his anguish is only the terrible confession of an irreparable crime; it is but a just vengeance receiving general applause, and divested of all pity for the suffering object! If he pre-

serves the unstable crown which he has contaminated, he is astonished at finding himself still its possessor; he wears it shuddering; he beholds it reeking with blood, and surrounded by an abyss. His terrified imagination, says Sully, can only seek refuge in futurity; he already hears raised against him the formidable cries of posterity; his rank and elevation constitute his greatest torment; he cannot hope for forgetfulness; he is aware that his name will never perish, and that his memory will for ever be accursed.

From the period of the Bartholomew massacre Charles the Ninth had never enjoyed a moment's repose; from that eventful epoch his health gradually decayed, and his character and temper underwent a complete change. In Brantome's Life of Charles the Ninth, we find, that M. de Longueville, conversing with Lanoue, who did not arrive at court until after the massacre, stated as follows:—"*You will no longer find that gentle, benign, and gracious monarch, you were formerly accustomed to behold; he is altogether changed, and has much more severity in his aspect at present than he ever before had of gentleness.*" His troubled imagination unceasingly presented phantoms and menacing spectres to his view; his days were spent in bitterness, and his nights were haunted by terror. His illness was of such an extraordinary nature that the physicians were unable to give it any name. His agonies, says the duke of Sully, were poignant in the extreme,

and the blood oozed from all the pores of his flesh. Charles the Ninth, according to Perefixe, being at the point of death, and hating his two brothers and his mother, sent for Henry of Navarre, in whom he had alone found honour and good faith, and by his transports and tears testified the sincere repentance he felt for all the enormities he had committed against the Huguenots: he affectionately embraced the prince, and as if impressed with a presentiment that Henry would one day ascend the throne, he affectionately recommended to his care his wife and natural son, whom he had by Marie Touchet, daughter of the lieutenant of the bailiwick of Orleans. This prince was afterwards known in history under the title of Charles de Valois, count of Auvergne, and afterwards duke of Angoulême.

The wretched monarch then adverting to the conspiracy of La Mole, thus expressed himself: "*I know that you played no part in that troublesome affair. If I could have been led to credit what was stated to me concerning you, your life would have been forfeited. Do not place any confidence in* * * * * *" Upon which the queen, interrupting the royal sufferer, said, "*Do not state that, sir.*"—"*Madame,*" resumed the king, "*I ought to say it, and it is true.*" Cayet affirms, that the individual alluded to by the king, or whose name was uttered in such low tones that it could not be understood, was the queen mother herself. In consequence of the advice of Charles the Ninth, Henry was uniformly upon his guard in respect to his mother-in-law; whose caresses never

prompted him to place his person in her power, from the moment he found means to effect his escape from court.

Charles the Ninth expired weltering in his blood, at the castle of Vincennes, on the 30th of May, 1574, on the feast of Pentecost, at the age of twenty-four, wanting twenty-eight days, after a reign of thirteen years and a half. His body was opened, according to Brantome, Sully, Mezeray, &c.; but neither abscess nor gangrene was apparent; *his body, however, was full of wounds, the cause of which the surgeons could never ascertain.*

On consulting Mathieu, D'Aubigné, Brantome, &c. to delineate the character of this prince, we must, in the first instance, make some allowance for his youth, and not be too rigorous in our judgment. His extreme vivacity and particular inclination for violent exercises,—for instance, toiling at the blacksmith's forge, where he used to labour in forming helmets, breastplates, &c.—should equally be taken into consideration. He was also too much addicted to hunting, a treatise upon which amusement, written by Charles the Ninth, exists, forming a small volume in octavo, printed in 1625, now become extremely rare. This prince received a very bad education; from his earliest infancy he was permitted to indulge in swearing—a disgraceful habit, which in consequence became a fashion with all the young men at court, not only under Charles, but continued to disgrace the periods of Henry the Third, Henry the Fourth, and part of the reign

of Louis the Thirteenth. To such a pitch was this practice carried, that under Charles and his successor, *legends of oaths*, as they termed them, were composed, more infamous than those of the Spaniards, quoted by Brantome at the end of his *Rodomontades;* and speaking of this vile custom, Jules Serclier, an ecclesiastic, living under Louis the Thirteenth, says, "*At the present day we scarcely recognise Christians, except by the belfries and blasphemies, where they lacerate the name of Jesus Christ from the head to the feet.*" The morals of Charles the Ninth were quite neglected, and his licentious conduct rendered completely public. He had two children by Marie Touchet, before mentioned; but the tenderness and esteem with which the graces and virtues of his wife Elizabeth of Austria inspired him, put an end to the delirium of youthful passion. By his queen he had only one daughter, who did not long survive him; and, previous to his dissolution, Charles expressed pleasure at not having a son, who would be left an infant upon the throne exposed to all the chagrins that had attended his own career; an idea which in itself sufficiently testifies how burthensome the crown had proved to that unfortunate monarch. In acting Charles had frequently no choice, but in the adoption of hazardous enterprises! The treasonable practices to which he was subjected, changed his character, naturally frank and tinctured with gaiety. He was fond of poetry and music, and patronized the individuals who excelled in those

pursuits. In expressing himself, his manner was at once noble and energetic, his mind acute, his conception easy, and his judgment correct. Of this he gave a signal proof, in appreciating the conduct of his brother the king of Poland. It was at first imagined that jealousy gave rise to his want of esteem for that relative; but it afterwards became apparent he had acquired a perfect insight as to his character. In short, any one dispassionately considering the conduct of Charles the Ninth, and allowing for his age, will find that he naturally possessed more good than evil qualities, and must also feel convinced, that, if, uncontaminated by the infamous precepts inculcated by an ambitious wicked mother, experience and resolute conduct had seconded his good intentions, he might have preserved France from those accumulated evils which she experienced under the reign of his successor Henry the Third.

CHAPTER VI.

The queen appointed regent.—Journey of the duke of Anjou into Poland.—He abandons his new kingdom to take possession of the French crown.—Cabal called the Politics or Third Party.—Montgomery taken prisoner and beheaded.—Conferences held at Millaud.—Character of the duke of Damville.—Advice of Margaret of Savoy to Henry the Third.—Damville joins the confederation of Millaud.—Interview of Catherine and her son at the bridge of Beauvoisin.—Characters of Henry the Third.—Three armies march against the Huguenots.—Insults offered to Henry the Third at the siege of Livron.—Procession of the penitents.—Death of the cardinal of Lorraine.—Coronation and Marriage of Henry the Third to Louisa of Vaudemont, niece of the duke of Lorraine.—Policy of the queen mother.—Conspiracy against Henry the Third, headed by his brother the duke of Alençon.—Character of Henry duke of Guise.—Infamous machinations of Catherine de Medicis.—Noble conduct of Henry of Navarre.—Flight of the duke of Alençon from court.—Junction of the confederate princes.—Liberation of marshals Montmorency and de Cossé.—Escape of the king of Navarre.—Rosny's first martial exploit.—Henry establishes his court at Agen.—He loses that town and Reole.—Singular conduct of Henry the Third.—Young Rosny's danger.—Narrow escape of the king of Navarre at the town of Eause.—Henry's interview with the queen mother at Nerac.—Pasquinade against Henry the Third.—Principal favourites of the king, and an odious crime attached to his character.

During the long malady of Charles the Ninth, Catherine de Medicis, who had adopted every

precaution in order to ensure to herself the regency, took possession of the reins of government immediately after the demise of the king. The monarch destined to reign under the title of Henry the Third was then in possession of the throne of Poland: his early youth had been illustrated by acquiring two brilliant victories, which announced a glorious and triumphant career, whereas, on the contrary, he was doomed to experience during the residue of his life the most extraordinary humiliations.

In his way to Poland Henry of Anjou took the route of Germany, and in traversing the protestant states, he encountered a great number of French refugees, victims who had escaped the slaughter of Saint Bartholomew. The young king when sojourning with the count palatine was completely surrounded by them; some regarding the prince with sombre looks, murmured against him in audible terms, as having been one of the authors of their misfortune. After a very cool reception, the count led his royal guest to the picture gallery, where the first portrait that struck his attention was that of admiral Coligny. "*You perfectly well recognise that man,*" said his host: "*in assassinating him, you put an end to the greatest captain of Christendom, and you ought not to have acted thus, since he performed for you and the king the greatest services.*" To this fulminating remark, which was a direct insult, the duke of Anjou replied by excusing himself on the plea of the pretended conspiracy of the admiral: "*Sire,*" answered the count

coldly, "*you know the whole history too well.*" This, however, was not the only disagreeable the king of Poland had to encounter upon his route, being subjected to many other insults no less repugnant to his feelings.

Catherine de Medicis forwarded the news of the king's death with all the celerity possible, which arrived in Poland on the fifteenth day, when the new monarch immediately confirmed her in the regency, and expedited the necessary powers to vest her with that authority. A council was then held by the king of Poland and his youthful advisers, in order to decide whether the affairs of that country should be regulated, which would necessarily occupy some time, or if they should instantly set out for France. As the majority were already desirous of returning, the latter advice was adopted, when the Poles used every effort to change the determination; and, upon this, the king, from political motives, feigned to acquiesce with their wishes, the better to allay any suspicions respecting his departure, and afford him time to make secret preparations. On the night of the 18th of June, 1574, which was particularly dark, he fled like a fugitive from his palace at Cracow, and in two days arrived on the frontiers of the German empire, from whence he proceeded to Vienna, where he received great honours; thus leaving exposed to the first fury of the Polanders his chancellor Pibrac, and those who had not been sufficiently alert to follow him.

This precipitate departure might be excused

from the necessity that existed of calming France, by presenting the king to his people; but it is difficult not to blame the measure, when we find that, far from hastening his journey, the monarch very complaisantly halted at every place where pleasures and festivities were prepared for his reception.

From Vienna the king proceeded to Gratz, and thence to Venice, where magnificent festivities awaited his arrival; and in all the principal cities of Italy similar motives occurred for retarding his progress, so that he did not arrive on the French territory until the expiration of three months, which occurred in September, after having continued some time at the court of Turin, where councils were held which decided the destiny of France. When at Vienna and Venice, the king was exhorted to have recourse to gentleness and clemency with the Calvinists; but he, no doubt, measured the quantum of their hatred towards him by that which he entertained in respect to them; and, in consequence, this wholesome advice produced no salutary effect upon his mind.

France was in one of those critical situations, when the selection of a bad line of conduct might reduce it to an extremity which the utmost stretch of human prudence could not counteract. The tempest was gathering equally without as in the interior of the kingdom. The prince of Condé already displayed a capacity far above his years; he had sought an asylum with the princes of Germany, for whose kindness towards

the French Calvinists, with whom he kept up the closest correspondence, he testified the warmest gratitude. The reformers were ready armed throughout all the provinces; they were supported by the cabal named *Politics*, which afterwards adopted the title of *Third Party*.

This consisted of discontented catholics, who alleged as causes for complaint the imprisonment of the marshals Montmorency and De Cossé, the captivity of the king of Navarre and the duke of Alençon, and the measures which they pretended the queen regent had taken to destroy the first houses of France, whose power awakened her suspicion. Under the shadow of these complaints, they conceived themselves authorized to fortify their governments, and to take up their cantonments in the cities under their control. Nothing was, in consequence, heard of, but fortresses being surprised, compositions, private treaties, some intervals of peace in the provinces usually devastated by intestine disorders, and the horrors of war suddenly transported into districts which had entertained the greatest hopes of the enjoyment of repose.

The queen regent's policy was, to maintain affairs in a state of equilibrium until the arrival of the king; she succeeded, by a mixture of firmness and well-timed condescension: with one hand she tendered war, increasing the army and commanding the generals to act; while with the other she signed truces. As soon as her opponents were willing to treat, she was found ready;

she even anticipated their views, but without testifying fear or seeming in the least urgent.

During the first days of the regency, Catherine sanctioned an act of rigour, which petrified the reformers and the leading men of the state. Montgomery, the involuntary murderer of Henry the Second at the tilting-match, and one of the leaders of a Calvinist party, had successfully carried on the war until that period in many provinces of the kingdom. It was to his victorious career in Bearn that the confederates were indebted for the re-establishment of their affairs after the battle of Montcontour. It was that nobleman who also prevailed upon queen Elizabeth to send succours intended for Rochelle; and he commanded the fleet, which was driven from the coast and wrecked in Normandy, when he was abandoned by his good fortune. Being invested in Domfront by marshal Matignon, Montgomery was forced to surrender, when, being conducted to Paris, the parliament proceeded upon his trial. On this occasion, it is singular that a man who had encountered every danger with perfect indifference, should not have been able to conquer the impulse of terror when standing arraigned before his judges.

Montgomery was condemned, as a rebel and accomplice of admiral Coligny, to lose his head; and, according to Anquetil, he was more culpable than any other of the party: For, says that author, having had the misfortune to kill the king, he ought to have consecrated to the widow

and his children all the talents he possessed, instead of precipitating himself, as he did, into the vortex of faction and intrigue. The judgment pronounced against this nobleman was executed; "*an example which teaches us,*" says De Thou, "*that in those acts which attack crowned heads, chance is imputed as a crime, even when the will is innocent!*"

Catherine was accused of having sacrificed Montgomery to the manes of her husband; but whether it was from motives of vengeance or justice, she proved inexorable. So powerful is the language of the law on the mind of a people, that when this nobleman was condemned according to the customary forms by order of parliament, no one entered a protest; some feeble murmurs were only disseminated in the writings that appeared. These Catherine despised, wholly occupied as she was in frustrating the machinations of the discontented, and endeavouring to thwart their meditated union.

Upon this subject several conferences took place between the reformers; the most famous of which were those at Millaud, a city of Rouvergne, held during the months of July and August, 1574. Although absent, the prince of Condé ranked as the soul of these meetings. He demanded that the reformed churches should raise an impost of themselves; and with the money so furnished him he promised to collect an army in Germany, and then march into France at its head. Of this force, Condé was to continue

general in chief until the duke of Alençon and the king of Navarre should have regained their freedom, to whom he would then yield the command; the court having detained them captives since the execution of La Mole and Coconnas. The confederates then reciprocally engaged themselves; that is to say, the Politics were to procure for the Calvinists the free exercise of their religion, and the latter, in return, were not to abandon their arms unless marshals Cossé and Montmorency were restored to liberty: in short, the whole were to carry on an obstinate war, until the states, legitimately assembled, should have devised solid means for a reform in the government, the punishment of the disturbers of public tranquillity, and the relief of the people.

The queen regent adopted every expedient in her power to prevent the effect of these conferences. In the first instance, she for a length of time, by means of various proposals, delayed the departure of the deputies of Rochelle and other churches who were to repair thither. She then despatched secret agents, in order to sow seeds of discord among the different ministers; but if the conclusion experienced delays, it was less owing to these underhand measures, than the irresolute conduct of Henri de Montgomery, second son of the deceased constable, duke of Damville, and governor of Languedoc.

This nobleman, possessing a gentle and pacific disposition, found himself, as it were, against his inclination, the leader of a party in the state.

He was an indolent man, difficult to be moved, and addicted to his pleasures; but of the most refined judgment, whom nothing could deceive when he took the pains to examine an affair; and in such case, sufficiently getting the better of his *nonchalance*, to follow up, like the most active man, those resolutions which had been dictated to him by his prudence. Finding that under Charles the Ninth the kingdom had been in a flame, Damville continued tranquil in his government. Nothing would have afforded him greater satisfaction than to remain at peace: but sometimes the enterprises of the Calvinists, at others the orders from court, intruded on his tranquillity. He returned, however, as expeditiously as possible: a mode of conduct which gave umbrage to the neighbouring governors, particularly Montluc, who was addicted to warfare, who fought merely for the pleasure of fighting, and would fain have had all the governors of provinces equally belligerent with himself.

On being compared with these active governors, Damville was regarded at court as a man on whom little reliance could be placed. The ministers several times attempted, but without success, to draw him from his province. When the imprisonment of his brother took place, Catherine, under the plea of holding a conference, despatched two of her most trusty emissaries, who are stated to have been charged with orders to seize him dead or alive. Damville, on the other hand, equally under pretext of

treating with the Calvinists for the restitution of peace, kept up a regular understanding with the party. Thus nothing existed but artifice and deception on either side. Being seized with a disorder, the symptoms of which appeared rather extraordinary, Damville conjectured that he had been poisoned. Yet, notwithstanding the conviction of such marked ill-will towards him, the love for repose would still have prevailed, and the duke would not have leagued with the confederates of Millaud, could he have promised to himself any surety on the part of the king, whom he went for the express purpose of meeting at Turin.

All the princes whom Henry the Third encountered on his route from Poland, particularly the emperor, and the doge of Venice, a man of most consummate prudence, entreated him, as we have previously stated, to adopt pacific measures on his return to France. Margaret of Savoy, his aunt, was anxious to witness his union with the Montmorencies, fully persuaded that upon that measure depended the return of many aliens of high rank, and the destruction of the *Third Party*. The king did not appear disinclined to adopt this advice; and, from the hopes in consequence entertained, the duchess engaged Damville to hazard a journey to Piedmont. He repaired thither, where he found himself in competition with Villeroi and Cheverni, despatched thither by the queen regent. While the king continued to be guided by the advice of the duchess, the counsel of Damville was well received;

but no sooner had the young monarch lent a favourable ear to the insinuations of his mother's ministers, than he displayed nothing but coldness and indifference to the governor of Languedoc. The latter, soon perceiving that there was no possibility of placing dependence on so vacillating a mind, took his departure; and on regaining the seat of his government, he immediately ratified his allegiance to the confederation of Millaud.

Henry the Third, having terminated his long journey, arrived in France after traversing Savoy, where he had had the interview with his aunt. He was conducted under an escort of six thousand infantry and one thousand cavalry, furnished him by the duke of Savoy, under an apprehension that in passing through Dauphiny he might be insulted by the Huguenots, who had a body of troops in that province. The queen mother, who had journeyed to Lyons with the whole court in order to meet her beloved son, repaired to the bridge of Beauvoisin, where she enjoyed the supreme satisfaction of beholding the crown on the brows of that child whom she had uniformly preferred to the other three. Catherine there presented to him the duke of Alençon and the king of Navarre, addressing him in these words: "*Here are two prisoners, whom I place at your disposal: you are acquainted with their conduct; it behoves you to pronounce their destiny:*"—when the king, says Perefixe, received them coldly: notwithstanding which, he attended to their excuses

with marks of favour, and then replied that he restored them to freedom, and should soon order the guards to discontinue attendance on their persons.

The character of Henry the Third soon became apparent; and although his actions must speedily develope themselves, it is nevertheless essential, in the present instance, to point out the leading contrasts of his mind, because they proved the real source of all the troubles that speedily desolated the kingdom.

Cheverni, one of his most confidential ministers, and who constantly remained attached to his person, states, "*that his judgment was not good; that he conceived better than he thought; that he entertained too high an opinion of his own capability; that he scorned the advice of others; and that his taste for voluptuousness caused him to be universally despised.*" The duke of Nevers, who from personal association contemplated the king minutely, says, that when he was attached to any one, he neither thought nor acted but from his advice, and exclusively according to his ideas; that he transformed himself, as one may say, into the persons of his favourites; and that his prodigality was beyond all bounds. Mathieu the historian, who acquired these anecdotes from Henry the Fourth, and the noblemen who were his contemporaries, affirms, that Henry the Third regarded cruelties which were politically useful, as just and permitted; an axiom, no doubt, instilled by his politic mother, from whom he also

acquired a taste for refined artifice in the management of public affairs: upon which account, when various expedients might be adopted, he uniformly chose the most indirect and complicated. He was certainly brave, but easily repelled, merely supporting war with willingness during the period of action. To these defects may naturally be attributed all the events of his reign. Gifted with more penetration than correctness of judgment, he adopted a project with eagerness, and always selected the worst means in order to ensure success. Being a complete slave to the will of his favourites, it is not surprising that Henry the Third should frequently have sacrificed the welfare of the state to their private interests. His inordinate profusion necessarily created sentiments of hatred in the minds of the people, who paid for his extravagance, and were consequently the victims. In short, owing to this inclination for false *finesse*, for hazardous enterprises, and voluptuous repose, the result proved a chaos of intrigues, suspicions, jealousies, and treaties of peace, improperly ratified, which only proved the seeds of new wars.

The eyes of all Europe were riveted upon Henry the Third, on beholding him mount the throne of France: every one called to mind the victories of Jarnac and Montcontour, which he had gained at the age of twenty-one; and in consequence some signal action was at least expected on his accession to power. He could not be formally accused of the massacre of Saint

Bartholomew, which was the act of the monarch who then governed. At the commencement of a reign, as hearts are from a natural impulse directed towards him who becomes the arbitrator of so many destinies, all the illusions of hope and ambition become the certain pledges of universal benevolence: besides, princes possess this peculiar advantage—that when the people are satisfied with their actual conduct, they may justify themselves for all past faults of which they have not made a public and solemn confession. No edict of Henry the Third had proclaimed his approval of the massacres;—a mere expression of pity towards the victims, and some acts of clemency would have sufficed to justify him:—on the contrary, he spoke of that deed as a grand political act, and gloried in having been instrumental to its perpetration. There was, in the fate of this prince, says Madame Genlis, something whimsical and singularly unfortunate: he abused all his good qualities; he misunderstood all the prerogatives and the dignity of his station; he became despicable—not from a perverse and wicked character, but, on the contrary, owing to those virtues of which he neither knew the extent or the utility: he uniformly misapplied firmness and condescension; his vigorous measures were either imprudent temerities or crimes, and his indulgence degenerated into meanness; he sullied himself by power, and was humiliated with clemency; filial piety and friendship proved in him inexcusable weaknesses;

and his devotion consisted in ridiculous superstition. He was neither acquainted with men or things; he was not deficient in understanding, neither did he reject truth; but profound ignorance, and an unaccountable frivolity of taste, rendered him incapable of reflecting upon and weighing his decisions; and he became, as it were, on a sudden, paralysed by indolence and effeminate sloth. The fruits of this character throughout his reign were, irresolution, false measures, inconsistency, puerile weakness, attempts the most outrageous and ridiculous, and a degradation resulting from every species of scandal. Such deplorable conduct could not fail to shake a throne, and ultimately prove the destruction of its sovereign.

From the two great victories previously adverted to, it was but natural to suppose that Henry the Third would place himself at the head of his armies, and vigorously follow up his rebel subjects: but, governed by Catherine, the king amused himself with negotiations; and these were pursued with that want of faith which had so long reigned in the councils of the queen mother, who was herself the very soul of duplicity. This despicable conduct, from the commencement of his reign, drew down upon the monarch the most vilifying marks of contempt.

Montbrun, a gentleman of Dauphiny, who fifteen years before had been the first to take up arms in support of the Calvinists, being summoned on the part of the king to surrender up

certain prisoners, had the audacity to make the following reply: "*How! the king writes to me as king, and as if I was to recognise him. I would fain have him to learn, that such a proceeding might do very well in time of peace; but, when war is waging, and we have arms in our hands, and the breech in the saddle, every one is but a companion.*" Montbrun afterwards paid with his life for this impertinent sally. Open acts of violence against a monarch are preferable to this tone of derision and contempt. The king, resolved on the annihilation of the Huguenots, set three armies on foot: one proceeded to Languedoc, under the command of the duke d'Uzes; Bellegrade received orders to repair to Dauphiny with the second; and the third, headed by the duke de Montpensier, marched into Poitou: but the vigour and unceasing activity of the Calvinists caused the failure of all these enterprises.

One of the royal armies having commenced the siege of Livron, a small town in Languedoc, and the king perceiving that his troops remained before the place without effecting any thing, repaired thither in person, accompanied by his whole train of courtiers. The besieged, from the summit of their walls, after ascertaining his arrival, began to utter the most vilifying taunts, exclaiming, among other things: "*Cowards! assassins! what do ye come hither to seek? Think you we are to be surprised in our beds, and have our throats cut, as you did to the admiral? Stand forth, young* MIGNONS!" (pretty youths);—this term was

applied by Henry to certain highly favoured lads kept in his retinue, of whom we shall have occasion to speak more at large in the sequel;—"*come hither, and experience to your cost, that you are not even capable of facing our women!*" During the attacks carried on against this town, an old woman was actually seen seated on the breach, unconcernedly spinning, and ridiculing the besiegers; and, as if the king had only presented himself to experience this insult, he retired, and the siege was in consequence raised.

Every thing declined in the armies, as in the council of state; because the able ministers, and the experienced generals, seeing all their credit eclipsed by youthful favourites, retired from employment. Far from feeling chagrined at this desertion, Henry felt gratified; for, being no longer troubled with grave and venerable advisers, he was less impeded in the pursuit of pleasure; and the places, which by this means became vacant, served as rewards for his *mignons*.

Henry the Third, when at Avignon, personally assisted at the procession of penitents; a species of devotion which courtly example rendered very common in France. For the performance of this ridiculous ceremony it was requisite to be habited in a kind of sack, hanging down to the heels: at the top of this covering was a hood similar to that worn by the monks, which completely covered the head and face, there being only two holes opposite the eyes, in order that the wearer might be enabled to see. There were black, white, green, and blue penitents, according to

the colour of their sacks: round their loins they wore a great chaplet formed of death's heads; and they carried a long scourge, wherewith many flagellated their shoulders. In warm countries—Italy for instance, where these fraternities were originally established—they performed their processions during the night; and this custom was equally adopted in more temperate climates where the order was tolerated. The devotion of these penitents consisted in parading the streets from church to church, reciting the litanies and singing the psalms in a most melancholy strain. We may easily imagine, under such a disguise, aided by the obscurity of night, how many enormities might be committed with impunity. It was this circumstance, so frequently followed by indecent acts, which attracted the young men of the court. Each was anxious to assist, in order to gratify the monarch: nay, even Henry of Navarre attended; who, the king laughingly remarked, "*was ill suited for such an occupation.*"

It was on quitting one of these penitentiary processions that the cardinal of Lorraine was attacked by a malady, which suddenly terminated his existence at the end of December 1574. This prelate was a personage of too great note not to excite suspicions that his death had been procured by means of poison; and his sudden dissolution occupied the attention of the court for some days. The queen mother conceived that he appeared to her under the form of a pale ghastly phantom, and that he uttered reproaches

against her; visionary chimeras, says Anquetil, that very rarely attack a firm mind and a conscience pure from stain. A dreadful tempest which happened to desolate the greater part of France the day subsequent to that ecclesiastic's death, was, according to the idea of the catholics, a certain prognostic of celestial vengeance, which had till then been appeased by the prayers of that great man. The Calvinists, on the contrary, asserted, that it was the sabbath of the demons, who had issued from the infernal regions to take possession of the cardinal's soul. We quote these extravagant fooleries in order that the reader may form a correct judgment of the party spirit that predominated among the adverse factions.

The death of the cardinal of Lorraine was speedily followed by the marriage of Henry the Third, who had been enamoured of Mary of Cleves, a princess of the house of Condé. This affection on the part of his majesty has served as the groundwork for some old French romances; and it was to that lady the king penned the letter from Poland with his own blood, which we have previously noticed. As soon as he had knowledge of the demise of his brother Charles the Ninth, he expedited a courier to the princess, announcing to her that she should be queen of France; but Mary soon afterwards died suddenly.

The king then called to mind the charms of Louisa of Vaudemont, niece of the duke of Lorraine, whom he had seen in his journey to Po-

land; and she soon after became his queen. Henry the Third arrived at Rheims, and was crowned on the 15th of February, 1575, by the cardinal of Guise; and on the ensuing day his marriage with princess Louisa was solemnized. This event added to the power of the house of Guise, of which duke Henry was the head, who then enjoyed favour, and was subsequently killed at Blois. This prince, says Perefixe, one of the bravest that ever existed, conceived the idea of governing the king through the medium of his relative queen Louisa: he had also contracted a close intimacy with the king of Navarre, whom he denominated his master, while the former equally honoured him with the appellation of *compère* (hearty good fellow).

The gentle and virtuous queen Louisa, however, was uniformly sad in the midst of royal grandeur: she could not console herself for the sacrifice she had been compelled to make in preferring the king of France to the brother of count de Salm, whose vows she had cherished from early childhood. This princess had equally captivated Francis de Brienne, of the house of Luxembourg; and Henry the Third, acquainted with this circumstance, finding him one day alone and melancholy, said, "*I have espoused your mistress, and am desirous of relinquishing to you my own.*" The change was far from equal, as the personage alluded to by the king was a young lady of very light character. Brienne excused himself, and in disgust immediately after retired

from court. It was thus the monarch, either from a want of delicacy or the indulgence of some ludicrous whim, disgusted his real friends, urging them to shun at once his society and his councils.

Notwithstanding the promise given by the king that he would liberate Henry of Navarre and the duke of Alençon, he still caused them to be so closely watched, that the former found it impossible to escape from court so speedily as he desired; for, independent of the ordinary persons employed to watch his movements, every domestic in the service of Henry was a spy upon his proceedings: added to which, he was apprehensive, that if discovered endeavouring to escape, the act would be followed by his assassination.

The queen mother, however, who had uniformly kept the king of Navarre at court with so much care, would have been glad to witness his absence; for the king, her darling son, began to take some notice of Henry's affairs; which was displeasing to Catherine, who was uniformly desirous of usurping complete control. Being therefore apprehensive that, in assuming to himself royal authority, he might diminish her own, she thought that the best expedient would be to embarrass the monarch by new factions and civil wars, whereof she alone, as we may say, possessed the master-key; by which means he would find it impossible to govern without her assistance. It was on this account that, so long

as the queen mother existed, she never ceased to foment quarrels in secret, and inflame the various parties at court and in the provinces, until at length, having desolated the state and subverted all the laws and social order, she herself expired amidst that general conflagration she had so long continued to feed and increase.

At the period of the king's preparation to proceed to Rheims in order to be crowned, a conspiracy was discovered against his person, headed by his brother the duke of Alençon, who was instigated by the friends of the deceased admiral, and those of La Mole, who had been his favourite. Some conceived it was a regular scheme, arranged by the queen mother in order to astonish and weaken the mind of the king; and the reason for accrediting this opinion was, that she prevailed upon Henry the Third to pass over the crime in so light a manner that none of the accomplices or instigators were brought to punishment. Whether or not such was the fact, the king upon this occasion shewed great confidence in Henry of Navarre, who, in conjunction with his friends, served as captain of the royal guard during the journey to Rheims, having received orders never to quit the door of the monarch's carriage; a conduct the more generous, inasmuch as he had no other cause to regard him with affection than the obligation which was imposed upon him by duty as his vassal, and being related to him by blood.

We have recently had occasion to mention

Henry duke of Guise, related to Louisa queen of Henry the Third. This prince, whose life had been sullied by the murder of Coligny, which was perpetrated under the plea of filial piety, nevertheless inherited many of the brilliant qualifications of his father, and he was equally famed for courage and audacity: but he neither possessed his principles, his virtue, or his genius. His physiognomy possessed so much attraction, that one of the courtiers remarked, "*the Huguenots themselves formed part of the League when they beheld the duke of Guise.*" He, generally speaking, displayed in affairs that *coup d'œil* of the master which facilitates prompt decisions, and leads to the adoption of proper expedients in critical moments, when a want of determination ruins every thing. To act, was with the duke the speedy result of a thought equally rapid and penetrating: he might be mistaken, but his first idea was uniformly preferable to subsequent reflection. The duke of Mayenne, his brother, exhorting him one day to weigh the inconveniences before he adopted a measure, "*That which I could not resolve,*" said he, "*in a quarter of an hour, I should never comprehend in the course of my life.*" This sentence is at once explanatory of his character and the turn of his mind; and such is the man against whom the irresolute and feeble Henry the Third had to contend! The ambition of the duke of Guise became gradually unbounded: Nature had created him to gain ad-

herents; but she accords something still more valuable to those whom she has framed to obtain a sovereign and lasting empire over mankind. The duke of Guise was formed to enjoy every momentary success with *éclat;* duty presented no barrier in his mind. False glory puffs up without elevating the soul; it allows of no impediment, or, rather, commands every thing by overleaping all its boundaries: whereas true glory enters only upon legitimate projects; it contemplates nothing gigantic or ridiculous; it is calm, because purity is the source of its action; the flame it inspires continues in the direct path; it guides and inculcates the precepts of wisdom. The king of Navarre was naturally fond of the duke of Guise, as we have previously observed; and his queen Margaret, who, to speak the truth, says Perefixe, could not exist without intrigues, did every thing in her power to keep up this friendly intercourse; endeavouring also to unite to their friendships Monsieur—(the duke of Alençon was so called after the coronation of his brother)—to whom she was very much attached.

But as the union of princes is the downfal of favourites and those who wish to encroach upon the government, the queen mother very adroitly stopped the progress of this connexion, by awakening jealousy in the king's mind against his queen; irritating the duke of Alençon against the duke of Guise, by bringing to his recollection the massacre of admiral Coligny; and incessantly fomenting disputes between the king of

Navarre and the duke of Alençon, by means of the intrigues of some women, and particularly Madame de Sauve, a deceitful coquette, beloved by both, and alike deceiving each, being purchased over to forward the interests of Catherine de Medicis.

While the queen mother fomented these dissensions, the faction called the *Politics*, or *Third Party*, carried on their intrigues; and at the period of the coronation of Henry the Third they finally ratified, at Nîmes, the treaty which they had previously projected. The confederates nominated their chiefs; established imposts, and regulated the levies and various expenditures: they also enacted laws for the administration of justice, for the discipline of the troops, the liberty of commerce, and the free exercise of Calvinism; while edicts were passed wholly independent of the monarch, the tenor of which was a solemn engagement never to ratify singly any treaty whatsoever. The *Politics*, or *Third Party*, continued faithful to this clause, upon which depended all the power of the confederacy.

It was, no doubt, very detrimental to the state, and still more so to the royal cause, to witness these divisions; and persons well acquainted with the history of those times, attribute the misfortunes and ultimate ruin of the race of Valois to that increasing discord which Catherine, by a most diabolical policy, fomented among her children. She nourished a deadly hate between the king and Monsieur his brother; in conse-

quence of which, a circumstance occurred tending as much to show the dauntless courage and generosity of the king of Navarre as any glorious action that subsequently marked his career.

Shortly after the coronation, Henry the Third was attacked by an excruciating pain in the ear; when, calling to mind that his brother Francis the Second had died of an abscess in that organ, which was attributed to poison, he conceived that Monsieur had conspired against his life; in which idea he was confirmed from various false reports that were industriously circulated. During the first impulse of his fury, he summoned the king of Navarre; and, expressing the chagrin he should experience in leaving the crown to such an unnatural successor, he charged him with the execution of a revenge which would have ensured Henry the crown, or at least have placed him nearer in succession, in the event of the poison not proving mortal. The king of Navarre did not conceal the horror with which such a proposal inspired him. "*On the contrary,*" said that prince, "*both my honour and my glory exact that I should watch to the utmost of my ability, in order to preserve the life of a prince who, at this moment, according to the order of succession, stands alone between myself and the royal authority. I may not personally feel attachment for him, but it is my duty to defend him.*" This, however, was not all; for the generous Henry, by his arguments, refuted the charge brought against Monsieur with so much warmth, that the king in consequence promised to adopt no measures against his bro-

ther. On the recovery of the monarch, the innocence of Monsieur was recognised; when the former returned thanks to the king of Navarre for having prevented the commission of such a crime, and his esteem for the prince increased accordingly. The king, however, did not cherish less animosity towards his brother, whom he caused to be constantly watched; notwithstanding which precaution, Monsieur found means to escape on the 15th of September, 1575. Perefixe, speaking of the king's wish to have his brother assassinated by Henry of Navarre, states, that he used every argument to convince the latter, that, if he did not put a period to the existence of such a wicked wretch as his brother, he would doubtless act in that manner towards himself; and the king's favourites, who indulged the same opinion as their master, seeing Monsieur pass near at the moment, by their murderous looks seemed already to sacrifice him to their vengeance.

Henry, continues our author, argued against the horror of such a crime; but the king, who was not to be satisfied with reasonings, flew into such a rage, that he was desirous the deed should be perpetrated on the instant, fearful lest he might fail in its accomplishment after his dissolution.

Had the two brothers, namely, the king and Monsieur, adds Perefixe, been out of the world, the crown of right devolved to the king of Navarre. Now, to all appearance, one was on the eve

of death; and it was at his option to have assassinated the other, having the favourites, the king's officers, the Guises, their friends, and almost all the nobility, at his devotion; for Monsieur did not rank high in public estimation, almost universally hated, and only supported by the brave Bussy d'Amboise. How few princes would have suffered such a favourable opportunity to escape them! Our hero, however, (for after such an action we may well designate him by that title,) felt shocked on witnessing the furious conduct of Henry the Third, and disdained to place it to his advantage. "Is there a more praiseworthy ambition than the being able to moderate its impulses, when they are not founded in justice; and feeling desirous of preserving one's conscience and honour, rather than compass the possession of a crown by indirect means? Diadems, acquired by such criminal acts, do not imprint the stamp of glory on the brows of those who wear them: they are rather brands of infamy—such as are applied to the culprit and the robber."

"Heaven, no doubt, approving the generous sentiments of our hero, predestined him to receive the sceptre of the flower-de-luce, because he felt no impatience to possess it before his time; whereas the brothers of the race of Valois, who strove to procure it from one another, uniformly came to miserable ends, and had for their successor that man who disdained to render himself a monarch through the medium of a crime."

After the convalescence of Henry the Third, he daily permitted his favourites to offer insults to Monsieur, who became the sport of every society; not considering that the contempt thus lavished upon his brother ultimately devolved upon himself, and that he thereby hardened his subjects to show him disrespect, by permitting them to trench upon the dignity of one so closely allied to his own person. The courtiers were even anxious to assassinate by night, at the gate of the Louvre, the gallant Bussy d'Amboise, who was the sole favourite and almost the unique support of Monsieur; and it was believed orders were issued, that in case the duke of Alençon had proceeded to his assistance, (because persons were purposely stationed in order to cry out, *They assassinate Bussy!*) he was himself to have shared a similar fate.

The duke of Alençon regarded this attempt upon the life of his friend as intended against his own person: added to which, a short time previously, reports had gone abroad that Damville had died at Languedoc; when the king issued orders that marshals Montmorency and De Cossé, still prisoners in the Bastille, should be strangled in that fortress; the non-execution of which sentence was only owing to the delays and remonstrances of Gilles de Souvré, who at length obtained a remission of the sentence until the news should be confirmed. It proved false, and the proscribed were thus saved. But these sanguinary determinations, although not accomplished, excited

the indignation of the duke of Alençon and the Montmorencies, who, being equally ill treated, made one common cause.

On the 15th September, 1575, the duke of Alençon effected his escape from court, and immediately sought refuge with the malcontents. This flight, says De Thou, excited a very strong sensation throughout the kingdom; the duke proceeding with all the expedition possible to the city of Dreux, which was one of the appendages to his title, and where he found a strong escort: from whence he despatched a manifesto to the court, abounding in protestations of fidelity to the king, complaints against his favourites, together with promises to the great and to the people; a stile usually adopted in such documents. This memorial, partly founded in fact, was productive of the most unfortunate consequences to the court. If Catherine, instead of sowing seeds of division between the princes by her abominable policy, had resorted to every means for the purpose of maintaining a good understanding in the royal family, the heads of the government would not have taken up arms against the sovereign authority, and contributed to its ultimate overthrow. The flight of the duke of Alençon created so much astonishment at court, and his resources and designs were so little developed, that orders were issued for the fortifying the town of Saint Denis, as if the duke had had an army under his command ready to undertake the siege of Paris.

The party of Monsieur became very numerous.

From Dreux he proceeded into Poitou; where he formed a junction with Lanoue, Levi de Ventadour, brother-in-law of Damville, and his nephew Henry de la Tour d'Auvergne, accompanied by a long train of nobility. The prince of Condé was also on his march from Germany at the head of a considerable force, intending to join him; but the queen mother prevented the accomplishment of this project. Fear generally awakens cruelty; and Catherine, learning that Thoré, brother of the duke of Montmorency, was on the point of entering France with a considerable force, destined to clear the way for the army of duke Casimir, son of the elector of the palatinate, sent a messenger to inform him, that, if he continued to advance, she would forward to him the heads of his brother and his brother-in-law: to which Thoré replied, "*If the queen performs her promise, she has nothing remaining in France which shall not feel the weight of my vengeance;*" and he then continued his march. This massacre was productive of a contrary resolution; for marshals Montmorency and De Cossé were delivered from the Bastille, in order to use their mediation with the duke of Alençon.

The queen mother exerted every endeavour to persuade the prisoners that they were solely indebted for their freedom to her kindness; and, after loading them with caresses, she conducted them into Touraine, where she came in contact with the duke of Alençon. The success of the treaty solely depended on the fate of arms. Thoré

was now upon the French territory, intending to unite his forces with those of the allies beyond the Loire. The duke of Guise, governor of Champaign, marched to encounter him; and, having attacked his forces, defeated them near Langres. During this action he received a wound upon the cheek, the scar from which continued to the period of his death; and upon this account he was surnamed *Le Balafré*, or The Cicatrized.

Things, however, continued in an undecided state; and the malcontents, regarding this check as of trifling import, still continued resolute; when a new event occurred to throw greater obstacles in the way of an accommodation. The king of Navarre, says Perefixe, had been powerfully solicited to follow the duke of Alençon and join the Calvinists, which the duke stated he had promised to do. Care had, however, been taken to estrange from him all those persons who might have favoured his flight; and in their place were substituted individuals feed to prevent any such measure:—he was also promised the rank of lieutenant-general in the king's army, a very potent spell to allure and retain him; added to which, his ardent passion for the beautiful Sauve proved a more powerful incentive. Notwithstanding this, however, the natural energy of his mind, his impetuous courage, and the dread he entertained lest the duke of Alençon and the prince of Condé should hold a first rank with the Huguenot party—which had been, as it were, his cradle, and was to become his

fortress—the remonstrances of many of his friends, and the harassing inventions of Catherine, who did every thing in her power to irritate the king against him: all these circumstances combined, at length urged Henry to adopt a plan for his escape.

The king of Navarre had been to hunt the stag in the forest of Senlis, and from thence repaired to M. de la Tremouille at Chantilly, under the pretext of taking some repose; but during the same night he proceeded on the road for Normandy, accompanied by five or six noblemen, the confidants and companions of his journey: among this number was his youthful pupil young baron de Rosny, then sixteen years of age, whose patron had attained his twenty-third year. The prince first sought refuge at Tours, where he instantly declared that his abjuration from Calvinism had been brought about by violent measures, and that he returned to that persuasion in which he had been reared from his infancy. Henry then despatched from Tours young Rosny, accompanied by Fervaques, in order to demand the princess his sister (madame Catherine de Bourbon, afterwards duchess of Bar) of the French court. This request was complied with; and upon the second day the princess, returning to the protestant faith, attended divine service at Chateaudun, and immediately afterwards rejoined the king at Parthenay. The intention of Henry in the first instance was not to join the duke of Alençon, for whom

he felt no esteem; but he was speedily compelled to adopt that measure, notwithstanding the truce which was still in force. The prince of Condé, who had not signed that document, was with a considerable body of German troops, commanded by prince Casimir; and at the beginning of March he joined the duke of Alençon, and ceded to him the direction of the army. The prince was much embarrassed with this honour, not only on account of his incapacity, but from the difficulty he experienced in paying strangers, more eager for money than glory. The duke and the prince of Condé sent a deputation to the king of Navarre, soliciting him to join them; when Henry, not without repugnance, repaired to their army, composed of about thirty-five thousand men. After this junction, the three princes, in their turn, made Catherine tremble; and every thing seemed to announce a sanguinary war. It was at this period young Rosny performed his first feat of arms in the neighbourhood of Tours, where several encounters took place between various detachments of the forces. The king of Navarre, whose attention was uniformly directed towards him, was given to understand that the youth had conducted himself with great temerity; upon which, having summoned him to his presence, he said, "*It is not upon such occasions I wish you to hazard your life: I applaud your courage, but I am desirous that you should employ it better.*"

This occasion was not so near as was generally

imagined. Catherine, to allay this storm, had recourse to her usual expedients—intrigue, seductions, and promises. To obtain a truce, she had liberated the marshals from prison, who advocated the cause of her son; and she now freed her daughter, Margaret queen of Navarre, who had been kept a prisoner from the period of the flight of her brother and her husband. The duke of Alençon entertained the most tender sentiments towards his sister, which were requited by similar feelings upon her part. The queen mother conducted Margaret to the camp of her son, who was also accompanied by many other ladies: this suite, selected from among the most brilliant youth of the court, was denominated *son escadron volant*, (her flying squadron.)

The queen mother, says Perefixe, in escorting Margaret to her husband, did not afford any great pleasure to either of them. The princess, who delighted in the splendour of the court of France—in which she may be said to have swum, as it were, in the plenitude of intrigue—thought her removal to Guienne a complete state of banishment; and Henry, well acquainted with her temperament and conduct, would have preferred her absence to her presence. However, as he found it was an evil without remedy, he resolved to submit quietly, and left his wife at complete liberty. He rather considered her in the light of the king's sister than his own queen. He also pretended that nullities existed in their marriage; but he patiently awaited the time and

season to give them publicity. Notwithstanding this, accommodating himself to the season and necessity of his affairs, he strove to derive advantages from her intrigues and credit; and he received no small benefit from them, at the conference which took place between the Huguenot deputies and Catherine at Nerac; for, while the latter thought to enchant them with the beautiful women in her suite and the eloquence of Pibrac, Margaret opposed to her mother the same artifices; gained over the gentlemen who attended her parent by the beauty of her retinue, and employed her own charms to such advantage as to enchain completely the mind of poor Pibrac. In consequence of this, he acted only as Margaret directed, and completely in opposition to the intentions of the queen mother; who, not conceiving for a moment that a man endowed with so much wisdom could be guilty of such folly, was in consequence deceived in many essential points, and thus insensibly led to yield several things to the Huguenots in opposition to what she had originally intended.

The duke of Alençon could not resist the artifices of his mother, the prayers of his sister, and the promises that accompanied so many united seductions. His possessions were augmented by the three provinces of Touraine, Berry, and Anjou, with a pension of one hundred thousand crowns. The prince of Condé was promised the government of Picardy; and prince Casimir, fine landed possessions in France, and

the support of his troops—to whom, however, a very trifling sum of ready money was given. For this they amply indemnified themselves by ravaging all the provinces through which they passed in marching to regain the frontiers, there to await the million of money that was to be paid to their commander. The king of Navarre was not included in this last treaty; but he pretended to feel satisfied, because it was very favourable to the Huguenots. If he procured no particular advantage, he was at least recompensed by the confidence and esteem of all his partisans, who from that period regarded him as their chief and protector, and closely attached themselves to his person.

Although the most advantageous peace was ratified with the Huguenots, and an edict issued granting them every civil and religious advantage which they required, nothing could allay their mistrust; and their fears were raised to the utmost pitch on hearing that the catholics had just entered into a confederacy, which was entitled *the Holy League.*

The king of Navarre retired to Rochelle, where he was received with open arms. He did not, however, remain long in that city, but proceeded to take possession of his government of Guienne; when he had the mortification to find the gates of Bordeaux shut against him, under pretext that the inhabitants were afraid he would secure the city to himself, and abolish the catholic religion: a galling affront to a courageous

young prince, which he very wisely suffered without complaining, not having it in his power to avenge himself; while he generously buried the recollection in oblivion, when he afterwards possessed the means of resenting this insult.

Catherine shortly after formally denied all the promises she had made to the Calvinists, who in consequence flew to arms even before the conclusion of the year 1575.

Henry the Third, being resolved to continue the war against the Huguenots, nevertheless deemed it expedient to send a deputation to the king of Navarre and the prince of Condé, exhorting them to return to the bosom of the catholic church. The prince of Condé refused to receive the deputies, causing it to be stated to them that he desired nothing so much as peace; and that, if the conditions of the last treaty were abided by, he was ready to lay down his arms. The king of Navarre admitted the deputies to his presence, and made the following wise reply: "*That he felt nothing but obedience to the king in every thing he was empowered to perform; that he supplicated his majesty to permit him the exercise of that religion in which he had been brought up; that he every day prayed to God he would continue to strengthen his mind in such belief, if it were good; and if it were not so, that he would accord him grace to abandon and give him power to abolish it.*" Henry established his little court at Agen, where he made himself adored by the people for his justice, clemency, and liberality. During a ball, however,

it so happened that some young courtiers, having extinguished the lights, and been guilty of many indiscretions, the inhabitants were so scandalized that they surrendered up their city to marshal Biron, who was governor of Guienne for the king; and, shortly after this, Henry also lost Réole by another act of youthful levity. He had confided the government of the place to an old Huguenot captain, named Ussac, who had a face dreadfully deformed; yet, notwithstanding his ugliness and his age, he became desperately in love with a young lady. Viscount Turenne, afterwards duke of Bouillon, then twenty-two years of age, turned this ridiculous passion into derision: the whole court laughed at the love-fit of the veteran; and Henry himself, instead of imposing silence on his courtiers, joined them, and uttered frequent sarcasms on the subject. Ussac could not bear the raillery of his master; and, to avenge himself for this inconsiderate and pointed gaiety, he abandoned his religion, his oaths, and his honour, and surrendered up Réole to Duras. The latter nobleman had equally shared the favour of the king of Navarre, but quitted him from a motive of pique, Henry having shown less affection for him than Roquelaure, who, says Perefixe, was one of the most honest and agreeable men of his times. To please, and to make oneself beloved without exciting jealousy, is a most necessary art for princes; and, above all, in tempestuous times. They are then better able to distribute places to age, merit, and abi-

lity, than to accord the preference to favourites and those more personally intimate. They testify favour and friendship; and, although they confer nothing of any consequence, they seem to promise every thing. Henry the Fourth, however, learned in the sequel this most important art, since no monarch ever made a better use of it, and knew so well how to be delicate in regard to the self-love of his friends.

The loss of the towns of Agen and Réole affords a striking lesson for all princes: it teaches them that they are responsible, in the eyes of the public, for the imprudences of all those who surround them; and that satire, from their lips, produces the deepest and most envenomed wounds.

Notwithstanding the reverses Henry the Third experienced, and the recommencement of warlike operations, he did not suffer his tranquillity to be molested. He usually went out every day in his carriage, accompanied by the queen, traversing the various streets of Paris, and carrying with him little dogs, of which he was particularly fond: he also frequented the convents for females in the environs of the city, in search of more animals of the same species, to the great regret of the ladies who possessed them; and he would also frequently cause the French grammar to be read to him, and learn to conjugate the verbs.

This same monarch, during the months of October and November, while the malcontents were fortifying themselves under shadow of the

truce, which was not then broken, used to frequent the churches, distributing arms, praying most devoutly, throwing aside his beautifully plaited shirts, to which he had formerly been so much attached, and assuming those of the Italian make with falling collars. He also ordered a general and solemn procession, in which the relics of the holy chapel were carried; and assisted in person, counting the beads of his rosary with the greatest zeal. By his command the whole city and the court attended, except the ladies, whom the king forbade to assist, alleging, that no true devotion existed when they were present.

It is still problematical whether Henry the Third performed these religious rites from motives of hypocrisy, a love of show, or from real devotion. It would be too hard to tax a man with hypocrisy who never knew how to conceal his own vices: but he may be suspected of ostentation for assisting at these ceremonies with an air of grand parade; and also be taxed with frivolity, since he proved the first to ridicule the buffooneries practised by his young *mignons*, under the sacks of penitents; and he may no less be arraigned for great impropriety of conduct, when, not satisfied with repeating his chaplet formed of *death's heads* along the public streets, he even *muttered them* in the ball-rooms, amidst scenes of debauchery, and also called them *the scourge of his great hackneys*. Perhaps, having received a bad education, the king persuaded

himself that religion only consisted in exterior appearances, which even with catholics should be regarded as mere accessories.

The king of Navarre, abandoned by part of his forces, effected nothing of great consequence at the commencement of the war. All enterprises of that description, then, consisted in seizing by stratagem, or on the first onset, the enemy's towns or castles; which, however, rarely happened without battles that frequently proved sanguinary. Henry was very badly supplied; and his army composed alike of Calvinists and catholics, who fought from mere attachment to his person: but this mixture was prejudicial to his affairs, owing to the enmity that existed between the two parties. Lavardin laid siege to Villefranche for the king of Navarre: young Rosny, having mounted the wall at the assault with his standard, was precipitated into the ditch by the shock of pikes and halberds; and continued there plunged in the mud, and so entangled in the colours, which he had resolutely determined not to yield, that he must undoubtedly have perished, had not some soldiers assisted him to quit the moat. The town being taken, was completely pillaged; *Rosny acquiring, for his share of the plunder, a purse containing a thousand gold crowns of the Sun,* (so called because in the centre of the coin was a stamp of the sun,) *which an old man, pursued by five or six soldiers, gave him in order to preserve his life.* It was thus, in those most disastrous times, that war was carried on by fellow-citizens against their

neighbours, in their own country, and conducted by the most humane and generous commanders. In civil commotions, no law exists; and warlike anarchy is, of all modes of plunder, the most horrible: it knows no bounds, nor even any moral punishment; it is carried on in despite of Divine and human justice, and proves no dishonour in the eyes of the multitude.

Sully records a singular adventure which occurred at the town of Villefranche some time afterwards. The citizens of that place, having formed a plot to take Montpazier, another small neighbouring town, by surprise, chose, without knowing it, the very same night for the execution of their plan which had been selected by the natives of Montpazier to seize upon Villefranche. It so happened, by mere accident, that, having chosen different routes, the two forces did not encounter each other. The whole was executed by either party with the greater facility, as the walls were left unprotected. They mutually pillaged and loaded themselves with plunder: each party applauding the complete success of the expedition, until the return of day, which manifested that the good fortune, or, more properly speaking, the disaster, was equal on both sides. The result was a reciprocal agreement, that each should return to his own habitation, and every thing be replaced in its former position; that is to say, as fully as could be accomplished, considering the havoc attending such an

expedition: and it is in this manner very long and sanguinary wars are frequently terminated.

The religious animosities that existed in the army of the king of Navarre produced an opposition in that prince's councils, which caused the failure of many of his plans, and, among others, that of the siege of Marmande. Lavardin attacked that city against the advice of Lanoue, and in opposition to the king's will: Rosny was charged with the seizure of a post about two hundred paces from the town; but scarcely had he gained the spot, when he was assailed by a detachment consisting of thrice his own force: he intrenched himself in some adjacent houses, which were fortunately near the spot, and there defended himself for a considerable time. He was at length on the point of surrendering, with the rest of his discouraged soldiers, when the king of Navarre, who saw the danger to which he was exposed, flew to his aid, fought during the whole of the day, and rescued them all. Notwithstanding the monarch's intrepidity, it was impossible to take the city; but propositions for peace having been forwarded from thence, Henry had thus a feasible pretext for withdrawing his forces.

In 1576, the king of Navarre learned that the town of Eause, which belonged to him, was in a state of revolt, owing to the machinations of some mutineers; and that the inhabitants refused admittance to the garrison he had despatched thither. He commanded a band of soldiers to conceal their arms under the hunting-cloaks where-

in they had dressed themselves, and to march to a certain place in the open country which he pointed out to them, and proceeded thither to await their arrival. In this manner he repaired to the gates of the town before an account of his march had transpired; and entered the place, without any obstacle presenting itself, at the head of fifteen or sixteen of his party, who had followed his person closer than the rest of the troop; among which was the youthful Rosny. The mutineers on the instant gave the word, when the bar of the city gate was let down, thus impeding the entrance of the residue of the corps. Immediately the rebels sounded the tocsin, and fifty armed soldiers rushed forward, precipitating themselves upon the king, who, thus enclosed within the place, and cut off from the main body of his troops, had no other force than the trifling number before mentioned. Three or four voices from among the revolters were in particular heard to exclaim, "*Fire at that scarlet cloak and the white plume of feathers, for it is the king of Navarre!*" — Henry, then turning to his little troop, said: "*My friends, my companions! it is now essentially necessary to display courage and resolution, for on that alone depends our preservation. Let each man follow me, and be guided by my example, not discharging his pistol until the muzzle touches the breast of his enemy.*" Having pronounced these words, he drew forth a pistol and marched directly up to the mutineers with undaunted courage, who, unable to withstand the attack, dispersed

and fled in disorder. Three or four small bands which subsequently presented themselves were driven away in a similar mnnner; but the enemy having at length mustered to the number of two hundred, the danger became imminent in the extreme. The king then sought refuge under the portal of a church, which facilitated his defence; and he there maintained his post with firmness. In this perilous situation he had still sufficient presence of mind to order two officers to ascend into the belfry, to make signal to those who were without the walls, in order that they might force open the gates; which was the more easily accomplished as, fortunately, the citizens had not wound up the drawbridge. Those inhabitants who were secret partisans of the king, without daring to manifest their sentiments at the period of the sedition, seeing the troops on the point of entering the city, attacked the mutineers in the rear, when the latter defended themselves with desperation; but the gates being forced, and the town filling with soldiers, the rebels were upon the point of being put to the sword, and the city given up to sackage, had not the principal inhabitants, headed by their consuls, thrown themselves at the feet of his majesty, who yielded to their supplications, and for all punishment contented himself with causing four of the most rebellious citizens, who had instigated to revolt, to be hanged.

The king of Navarre uniformly manifested the same resolute conduct upon various occasions.

The prince, says Sully, exposed himself like the commonest soldier. He performed before the town of Nerac a feat of particular intrepidity; for a body of cavalry having been despatched to surprise him, he repulsed it almost single-handed. Examples of this nature animated the officers to such a degree, that during the same day twelve or fifteen advanced, pistol in hand, within a few paces of the catholic army. Among these desperadoes was young Rosny, of whom the king never lost sight; and on this occasion, says Perefixe, addressing his speech to Bethune, he exclaimed: "*Go to your cousin baron Rosny; he is as wild as a cockchafer: withdraw him from thence as well as the others, and conduct them to my presence.*" Rosny obeyed; and appearing before his prince, the latter observed that his horse was wounded; upon which Henry flew into a passion, and reproached him bitterly for his foolhardiness.

The queen mother, uniformly occupied with intrigues, which she termed negotiations, quitted Paris, followed according to custom by her whole court. She travelled through various provinces, and frequently came in contact with the king of Navarre; particularly at Nerac, on which occasion Catherine demanded of the prince, whether the pains she had taken were to be productive of no beneficial effect—she, who so ardently laboured for peace? "*Madame,*" said Henry, "*it is not I who prevent you from sleeping quietly in your bed: on the contrary, it is you who*

impede me from reposing in mine. The pains you take afford you pleasure and nourishment; repose is the greatest enemy to your existence." During the same conference, the duke of Nevers having remarked to the king of Navarre, that he would be much more honourably situated near the person of the king, than in the midst of individuals over whom he could exercise no control, since, in case of wanting pecuniary supplies, he would not have credit to establish an impost at Rochelle: "*Sir,*" answered the prince, "*I do whatsoever I please at Rochelle, because I want nothing more than is absolutely necessary.*"

Notwithstanding the recommencement of hostilities, the treasury of Henry the Third was exhausted; and the king, in consequence, became desirous of finding a resource in the purses of the citizens of Paris. The period, however, was not favourable. The preceding year the king had endeavoured to procure a loan, but was only answered by remonstrances: on the present occasion, however, pasquinades were added; of which the following, affixed to the walls of the Louvre, will serve for an example:

"*Henry, by the grace of his mother, entitled king of France and Poland, imaginary porter of the Louvre, churchwarden of Saint Germain l'Auxerrois, merry-andrew of the churches of Paris, plaiter of his wife's ruffs and her hair-dresser, mercer of the palace, frequenter of baths, guardian of the four beggars, and protector of Capuchins.*"

The people murmured aloud on beholding the king surrounded by youthful courtiers, on whom the public money was wantonly lavished. His principal favourites were Caylus, Maugiron, Livarot, Saint Mesgrin, Joyeuse, Nogaret, and La Valette. Most of these had been introduced to court by René de Villequier, who filled the disgraceful post of purveyor to the royal pleasures, and these personages were the most noted of Henry's *mignons;* whose effeminate appearance gave rise to a most odious imputation, which the king's conduct by no means refuted. The result was, his being regarded with contempt by the meanest of his subjects; and this circumstance tended more than any thing else to attach a degree of credit to the famous faction denominated the League, of which we shall immediately have occasion to speak.

CHAPTER VII.

Description of the Holy League.—Its early origin in small associations.—Influence of the young duke of Guise with the catholics.—Oath of the League, as tendered in Picardy.—Laws of that confederacy.—Henry the Third made acquainted with the League.—Proposed plan of the leaguers.—Ideas of the pope and the king of Spain in regard to the League.—First assembly at Blois.—Henry the Third determines to become chief of the League.—Brutal excesses committed during the war of the League.—Sanguinary deed of Baleins.—Magnanimous conduct of Lanoue.—Peace ratified at Poitiers.—Licentiousness of the court.—Insolence of the mignons or favourites.—Disgusting depravity of Henry the Third.—Expedient of Saint Luc to reform the king.—Conduct of the Flemish in regard to calling in foreign aid against Spain.—Policy of Philip the Second.—Prosperous state of the duke of Anjou's affairs.—Cause of the animosity between Henry the Third and the duke of Anjou his brother.—Precipitate step taken by the king.—The duke of Anjou retires from court.—Fatal duel between Caylus and Antraguet.—Deaths of those mignons and of Saint Megrin, and conduct of the king on those occasions.—Anecdotes of the duke of Guise.—The king causes the assassination of Bussy d'Amboise.—Death of Dugast through the intervention of queen Margaret.—Singular amusements at the court of the king of Navarre.—Politic measures of the queen mother.—Attempt to assassinate viscount Turenne.—Defection of the prince of Condé.—Henry of Navarre attacks Cahors.—His astonishing bravery, and glorious result of that daring enterprise.

PERSONS occupying themselves with the study of history are not surprised to find revolutions

accomplished by great conquerors, armed with legitimate powers, or those which appear such; or occasioned by the discontent of the great or the populace, attacked in their property or privileges. Such events equally result from supporting an ancient and venerated religion, or a dogma newly established: indeed, they are so common, that few states have not furnished examples of revolutions originating in those causes.

Some very singular circumstances attended the League; namely, a general rising of the catholics against a most catholic monarch, uniformly known as such, notwithstanding the suggestions employed to make his faith suspected: next, the bold pretensions of this audacious confederation, even at its commencement, and before it had acquired any great strength; its steady and uniform march, notwithstanding the publicity of its proceedings, and the measures adopted to arrest its progress; the object of the plot, which was to place a stranger upon the throne, without even the shadow of a title; the appalling success of the League, certainly punished in the person of its chief, but so ably planned, that from his blood which was shed an host of new monsters was engendered: fanaticism, that raises the poniard against kings; anarchy, that desolates empires; and the tyranny of a brutal and insolent populace, more dreadful than that of the great;—in short, all the plagues with which the Almighty in his anger afflicts the human race; plagues that ravaged France until the Omni-

scient, touched with the ills that oppressed that realm, crowned the efforts of Henry of Navarre with success, making him the pacificator of the kingdom.

It must not be imagined that the Guises on a sudden conceived the project of occupying the throne of France: their ambition had its stages. It is conjectured, that the cardinal of Lorraine planned the League, after the battle of Dreux, in the council of Trent: but if he imagined any thing at that period, it was, at most, the mere design of uniting the destiny of his house with the catholic religion, as the zealous votaries of that faith regarded his brother as their chief support. Perhaps his political views went so far as to conceive the idea of fortifying the connexion by uniting it with the other catholic powers—namely, the pope and the king of Spain. The League was, in reality, formed as early as 1563, in the provinces as well as at court; when small private leagues existed, which the government suppressed: this primary step was the work of the restless catholics, who, seeing the body of Calvinists alarm the king's councils, and procure grants at his hand, united to create a counterpoise, and prevent those concessions on the part of royalty from becoming prejudicial to their religion:—those small leagues, however, scattered and isolated, had no central rallying-point. It was not until the year 1576 that the grand question arose about electing a chief, capable of supporting the ancient form of worship, independently

of the king, who was deemed too weak. It is possible that, from the period in question, Henry of Lorraine, duke of Guise, the leader chosen, no longer prescribed any boundaries to his ambitious projects. It would, however, be rather chimerical to suppose that his views were then directed to the throne, although such a project was fully developed previous to the death of the duke of Anjou.

In the Memoirs of Princess Margaret, and in the Life of De Thou, we find that Guise, son of the duke of that name who was assassinated before Orleans, prior to the attainment of his nineteenth year drew upon himself the regards of all France, by his gallant defence of Poitiers, then besieged by admiral Coligny. Neglecting no opportunity of harassing the Calvinists—covered with the blood of the Bartholomew slaughter, and prodigal of his own—at the head of the army which defeated the German forces near Langres—he uniformly deprecated the temporizing conduct of the court towards the reformers; by which means he gained sovereign sway over the hearts of the catholics. The murmurs of the most zealous, at the news of the last peace, at once traced out to him the part which he had to play. He had formerly aspired to an alliance with Margaret of Valois, the wife of the king of Navarre; but the indignation of Charles the Ninth, which we have previously mentioned, on witnessing his audacity, forced the duke to renounce his pretensions. Henry

the Third, at the period in question, was very partial to the young prince of Guise; whom he one day embraced, and, tenderly gazing on his sister, said, "*Would to God that you were my brother!*" But, upon the king's return from Poland, he displayed towards the duke nothing but indifference. Guise experienced the same coldness from the duke of Anjou and the king of Navarre, whose good graces he in vain studied to acquire. Perceiving, therefore, that he had nothing to expect from the court, where every endeavour was resorted to for the purpose of exciting his disgust, he totally gave himself up to popular favour, which manifested itself in his support.

The citizens of Paris, the merchants, those connected with the palace, and others, not content with conversing occasionally among themselves on affairs of state and religion, went so far as to hold clandestine assemblies, in which they made those the leading topics. Having already observed that the Calvinists bound themselves reciprocally by oaths, and that they made general subscriptions in support of the common cause, the discontented conceived that the best plan would be to act in a similar manner. It is not certain whether this mania for associations originated in Paris or the provinces: the most ancient document remaining in proof of this, and the only instrument handed down entire, is that of Picardy. The lord of Humieres, who commanded there, had had a personal quarrel with the prince of Condé. Fearful of being deprived of power,

in case the prince, according to an express clause entered into at the last peace, should be put into possession of his government, Humieres exerted himself to the utmost in order to raise obstacles; and adopted the best expedient, that of forcing the nobility, by a solemn engagement, not to permit any thing to be done which might prove prejudicial to the welfare of the Roman catholic religion. For this purpose he prepared the form of an oath, which he presented to the gentlemen of the province, who were as much attached to their religious tenets as devoted to their governor. This document they signed; and in a short time the whole of Picardy, including cities, towns, and villages, became partisans of the League.

The preamble of this writing, and the intents proposed, appeared at the first glance to contain every thing that was praiseworthy: they engaged by an oath to persevere until death in the Holy Union, formed in the name of the Trinity, for the defence of the catholic faith, of king Henry the Third, and the prerogatives which the kingdom enjoyed under Clovis; by which insinuation the leaguers were enabled to extend their views to objects altogether unconnected with religion: but the most subtle poison was concealed in the very laws of the association, conceived in the following terms:

"We hereby oblige ourselves to employ our wealth and our lives for the success of the Holy Union; and to pursue, even until death, such as

seek to oppose it. All those who shall sign are under the safeguard of the Union; and in case they are attacked, sought after, or molested, we undertake to defend them, even by force of arms, *against any person whatsoever*. If certain members, after having sworn, should renounce their oaths, they shall be treated as rebels, and refractory to the will of God, without those who may have contributed to such vengeance being ever molested. *A chief shall be immediately elected, whom all the confederates must obey; and such as refuse are punishable according to his will.* We will exert every effort to procure partisans, arms, and all things necessary, according to our ability, in support of the Holy Union. *Those who shall refuse to join, shall be looked upon as enemies, and pursued even to death. The chief alone shall decide any points that may be contested among the confederates; who cannot apply for advice to the ordinary magistrates without his permission.*" Thus all the power of sovereignty was vested in their future chief, who, it was perfectly well understood, was not to be the king.

Henry the Third acquired no knowledge of this association against his authority, until a long list of gentlemen, ecclesiastics, wealthy citizens, inmates of the palace—cities, towns, and even whole provinces—had registered themselves allies of the League. As to the secret plan and hidden springs that were to be set in motion, he learned their ramifications, at all events, in sufficient time to provide against them, had he

been capable of adopting a bold resolution, and following it up with energy. This information the king acquired from his ambassador at the Spanish court, where the leaguers had secret emissaries: as well as through the medium of the Calvinists, who intercepted and handed over to the king the papers of an advocate named David, despatched to Rome by the League, and fully acquainted with all the mysteries of the plot. Some authors have pretended that these were merely suppositious papers, fabricated by the enemies of the duke of Guise; but it would have been very singular indeed if the writers had divined and exposed beforehand, with the most trifling difference, every thing that was subsequently attempted by the leaguers. At all events, whether the documents in question were real or fictitious, as they precisely developed the whole plan of the intrigue, we will in few words make known the views of this formidable association.

The memorial commenced by extolling the Guises, who were represented as descendants from Charlemagne; after which it proceeded to state: "That since, to the prejudice of that emperor's children, Hugues Capet seized upon the throne, the malediction of Heaven had pursued the usurpers; some having been deprived of reason, others of their liberty; while the anathemas of the church had also awaited certain representatives of that race. That, under such unfortunate reigns, the kingdom had become a prey

to heretics; that the last peace, so advantageous to the Calvinists, would permanently establish them in France, if advantage was not taken of that opportunity to restore the sceptre to the representatives of Charlemagne. That, in case such a resolution was adopted, the catholics had determined as follows:—That the clergy should inveigh against and oppose the privileges granted to heretics; and foment the people, so as to prevent the sectarians from profiting by the same. That, in case Henry the Third, betrayed any apprehension lest the rupture of the treaty of peace in this essential point should replunge him into new difficulties, he was engaged to throw all the odium of the affair on the duke of Guise; and that the danger to which the prince would expose himself, in thus drawing down upon his own head the hatred of the sectarians, would render him still dearer to the catholics. That his boldness would encourage the most timid to sign the League, and augment the number of their association. That all the confederates had sworn to recognize him their leader: that village curates should register the names of those capable of bearing arms. That the people would be directed how to act when at the confessionals of their priests, who should receive instructions to that effect from superior ecclesiastics, they having acquired the same from the duke of Guise, as the fountain head, who would send proper officers to teach the use of arms to the newly enrolled."

"That the religionists having themselves demanded an assembly of the states, the same should be convoked at Blois: that the chief should cause such deputies to be elected in the provinces as were inviolably attached to the sovereign pontiff and the catholic religion. That commanders should be despatched throughout the kingdom, to raise a specific body of soldiers, who would promise on oath at any given time and place, to act as they should be commanded. That gentle measures should be resorted to in order that the duke of Anjou, the king of Navarre, the prince of Condé, and all suspected nobles, might be prevailed upon to attend the sitting of the states with the king. That the duke of Guise should not be present, to prevent suspicions; and that he might be more capable of issuing his orders at a distance from the court, from whence his instructions were forwarded."

"That in the event of any one opposing the resolutions passed in the states,—if a prince of the blood, he should be pronounced incapable of inheriting the crown; and any other, punished with death: and in case of escape, that a price should be set upon his head. That the states should pronounce a public profession of faith, cause the publication of the council of Trent, confirm the orders issued for the extirpation of heresy, and revoke all edicts tending to oppose that measure. That the king would by this means become liberated from the promises given to the Calvinists; to whom a certain time should be granted

to effect their reconciliation with the church. That, as during such interval arms must be resorted to for the purpose of reducing the most refractory, the states would make known to the king, that, in case he was desirous of success, it was only requisite to place one man at the head of the enterprise; and that they should then summon the duke of Guise, the only experienced general who had never had any connexion with the heretics."

"That, to give weight to this last measure, on the day agreed upon, the troops secretly enrolled in the provinces should appear, and invest Blois, together with some foreign forces. That Monsieur should be seized, and tried as a criminal guilty of high-treason, both divine and human, for having extorted from his brother the conditions so favourable to the rebellious heretics. That the duke of Guise, at the head of the army, should pursue the revolters, secure the principal cities, place under a strong guard all the accomplices of Monsieur, whose trial he should terminate; and finally, by the advice of the pope, as Pepin had done in regard to Childeric, imprison the king himself in a monastery, where he was to remain for the residue of his existence."

Such is an abridgment of the plan proposed by the advocate David. It was, in the first instance, deemed chimerical; and who could have imagined that a period would ever occur when it was on the point of being realized? Pope

Gregory the Thirteenth, without placing any great confidence in these projected measures, tolerated them, as being at all events calculated to suspend the progress of Calvinism in France. Philip the Second of Spain, who always apprehended lest the French, enjoying internal repose, should send succours to the rebels in the Low Countries, seized with avidity the present occasion to excite dissensions: for which purpose he promised to aid the League with men and money; an engagement which he too faithfully realized for the tranquillity of that kingdom.

The first states were convened at Blois; at which period Henry the Third had acquired a knowledge of the projects formed by the leaguers. Nearly all the propositions made during the sittings tended to vilify the royal authority: the king, however, contented himself with eluding them by feigning not to be aware of the consequences; a line of conduct that manifested either a want of discernment, or a timidity that fortified all the pretensions of the ambitious. Had Henry the Third displayed penetration and vigour, he would, in those first moments, have reduced the enemies of his authority to justify themselves in the eyes of the nation, and delayed the execution of their projects. The states were anxious for a war with the heretics; but the king, less from motives of policy than a sentiment of revenge, ratified a peace, to punish the Guises for the disquietudes to which he was

subjected on their account. At all events, it became necessary to enter into a close alliance with the king of Navarre, of whose talents, bravery, and uprightness, he was fully aware: but he foresaw the storm without striving to allay it; he merely coveted the enjoyment of a short interval of repose that was to precede the explosion. Henry the Third, like all weak and idle characters, voluntarily closed his eyes on the future: he deemed it sufficient to occupy himself with the present; and, in order to dispel the urgent fears which he apprehended from the League, ultimately conceived the plan of declaring himself chief of that association. By adopting this imprudent measure, he vilified the royal dignity, and increased the importance of the seditious; since his name was to abet their ambition, and conceal their attempts until the moment when they believed they might without danger proceed to the last extremity.

Such an unlooked-for determination on the part of Henry the Third, disconcerted, at least for some time, the duke of Guise and his adherents. They, in consequence, proceeded to Blois; and not being able to embarrass the king any other way, urgently pressed for a declaration of war against the Huguenots. To this the king replied, that it would first be necessary to ascertain the intention of the absent princes and nobles; that they perhaps might feel disposed to return to the bosom of the church; and that their exalted rank, at least, deserved such a summons.

It was impossible to contradict these observations; and the states therefore named deputies, who were charged to wait upon the king of Navarre, the prince of Condé, and the duke Damville; when they received the negatives of those princes, as mentioned in the foregoing chapter.

Licentiousness and disorders of every description were carried to their height during the civil commotions. The certainty of being pardoned for the most atrocious deeds, on abandoning one side to join the other, incessantly facilitated acts of the most unlicensed plunder: there existed at that epoch neither subordination throughout the kingdom, nor discipline in the armies; valiant and honourable chiefs were compelled to sanction the insubordination and insolence of their soldiers, and very frequently the most dreadful excesses. In a rencounter, the king of Navarre, after having, at the head of forty men, vanquished three hundred of an arquebuse corps, made them lay down their arms, and then granted their lives; when, just as this event occurred, a powerful reinforcement arrived from Montauban, to join his forces. These new troops, seeing their enemies disarmed, to whom pardon had been accorded, precipitated themselves with fury on the defenceless band. In vain the king strove to preserve them: the soldiers of that corps, says Sully, *tore them from our arms, and stabbed them without mercy;* and, in consequence, the whole were massacred. Execrable

crimes, however, produced this carnage. The wretches who had just been sacrificed by the soldiers of Montauban, had previously carried off six women from that town; and, after having subjected them to every species of brutal violence, put a period to their lives with a barbarity, the detail of which would sully the pen of an historian!

Cruelty, says De Thou, frequently turning justice into derision, profaned the dreadful preparatives, which served for private vengeance. A captain named Baleins commanded the castle of Leitoure for the king of Navarre. He had a sister who was seduced, and then abandoned, by one of the officers of the garrison: she complained to her brother, who ordered her to remain silent; and feigning total ignorance of the affair, got the officer into his power, whom he immediately loaded with irons. He then conducted his prisoner into an apartment, where a notary was seated, with witnesses, and the young lady ready to give her depositions against the accused. Baleins, throwing himself on a sofa, began to interrogate as judge the man whom he had already condemned in his heart. The unfortunate officer strove in vain to deny the crime laid to his charge, and disputed the testimony of his barbarous accusatrix. Baleins condemned him to death; caused the sentence to be written out; and then, quitting the post of judge, took upon himself that of executioner, by plunging a dagger into his heart. For this flagrant crime he

was acquitted, by asking pardon of the king of Navarre; who granted it, under fear that this ferocious wretch, in case of a refusal, would have surrendered up the castle and joined the opposite party.

What admiration do we not feel for Henry the Great, when we call to mind that he had preserved a loyal character at the court of Catherine, and while amidst so many horrors the sentiments of humanity no less predominated over his mind! Nothing could change the uprightness and generosity of that soul, which was truly great and royal.

To individual excesses was added every enormity inseparable from the march of armies; for there were several on foot. Though they achieved great exploits, they uniformly shed blood and ravaged every thing in their progress. Brave Lanoue had the good fortune and glory, so worthy of him, of rescuing two forces on the point of destroying each other. Being deputed to convey news of the peace to Languedoc, he found Damville, who had gone over to the royal party and commanded for the king, and Chatillon, son of admiral Coligny, for the Calvinists, in presence of each other under the walls of Montpellier. They were on the point of battle: all the orders were issued, and the victims marched to the encounter. Lanoue, at the risk of being sacrificed by a thousand wounds, dauntlessly rushed between the contending forces; and in the midst of pikes, accom-

panied by the rolling of the drums, he cried aloud —"*Peace, Peace.*" He then made a motion with his hand, and drew forth the treaty in sight of the soldiers: they paused, the two generals approached; they surrounded—listened to Lanoue, and acquiesced with the conditions. A moment later they would have butchered one another; whereas all became joy and hilarity; the warriors embraced each other, and separated completely reconciled.

The treaty of peace ratified at Poitiers in September 1577, was accompanied by secret articles granted the same month to the king of Navarre in the cities of Bergerac and Perigord. The edict composed of sixty-four heads, and the secret articles comprising forty-eight, form a code of regulations, in which Henry the Third assumes the tone of absolute legislator and dispenser of graces: but amidst the efforts resorted to for the purpose of saving the honour of the throne, the constraint of the monarch is apparent, who was compelled to yield to the urgent necessity of circumstances. By this treaty, the best conceived and the wisest of that monarch's reign, all the advantages formerly given to the reformers were not sanctioned; and from that circumstance it was calculated to inspire greater confidence. In this edict the king re-established the Huguenots in all the privileges of citizens: it tolerated their appointment to public situations, as well as to the magistracy and other dignities; it sanctioned the judges purposely established

in their behalf in each parliament; places of surety and enrolling of troops were allowed, provided the reformers would pay tithes, surrender up church property which had been seized upon, show outwardly respect for the catholic festivals, and not molest the papists in the observance of their rites.

It is to be remarked, that Henry the Third in this edict, speaking of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, says: "*The disorders and excesses of the 24th of August and following days, which happened to our great regret and displeasure;*" and that, after forbidding to the Calvinists "*all practices, leagues, and correspondences beyond the frontiers of the kingdom,*" he indirectly attacks the League entered into by the catholics, in these words: "*And all leagues, associations, and fraternities, made or to be entered into, under what pretext soever, to the prejudice of our present edict, shall be broken and annulled, as we by these presents break and annul them; expressly commanding all our subjects not to collect in future any pecuniary levies, to seize fortified places, or to enrol men, under pain of being rigorously punished for contempt and infringement of our ordinances.*" Such was the nature of the edict which Henry the Third was accustomed to call in complaisance—*My Edict!*

Had the stipulations of this treaty been faithfully executed, they might have served to disarm the whole kingdom; but the people entertained towards the monarch neither confidence nor esteem. The ridicule which he drew down upon

himself in yielding to indecent diversions, while he ought to have been seriously occupied with his affairs, rendered him a most despicable object. *He publicly ran tilts at the ring, habited as an Amazon with large drops in his ears; he had balls and tournaments, and constantly masquerades, at which he usually appeared in female attire, with his vest open, so as to display his neck decorated with strings of pearls and three collars of glittering gems, ranged in the manner adopted by ladies of the court at that period.* This certainly took place at the time of the carnival, which might admit of some pastimes not generally tolerated.

It was not, however, during those licentious festivities that Henry the Third ordered a public feast, *at which ladies dressed in green, and wearing men's apparel, performed the service of the table: while, in revenge, the queen mother gave another repast, where the most handsome and well-behaved females of the court, half naked, with dishevelled locks, like the newly married of those days, were employed to wait upon the guests.* If we curtail from these recitals what exaggeration may have contributed, it is nevertheless certain that great indecencies took place at court. The sums expended at these festivities were enormous: the people murmured at such useless profusion during a period of misfortune and dearth; and on this account they became more attached to the League, the chief of which did not neglect such occasions to alienate the hearts of the catholics from their sovereign. The reformers, on the other hand,

always apprehensive that the edict would not be faithfully executed, appeared little inclined to support the cause of the throne. In short, as if the king felt apprehensive that he had not sufficient difficulties to encounter, he was himself instrumental in keeping up the divisions of his court, as well as in the bosom of his own family.

"*Henry the Third*," says Le Laboureur, "*took delight in having several favourites at the same time: he loved them to be valiant even to temerity; witty, provided they were vicious; in short, he denied them nothing, provided they proved expensive and magnificent, and that they demonstrated signal contempt for those who pretended that consideration was due to their birth and their merit.*" It need not be inquired whether such young men, certain beforehand of their master's favour, executed strictly and to the letter these commands so completely accordant with their own tastes.

Sometimes, however, these *mignons* had to encounter rivals equally haughty with themselves, who did not tamely submit to their insolence, and who even anticipated it. One day the king, *proving brave to desperation, with frizzed and curled locks, and adorned with a plaited ruff, assisted at a ceremony, followed by his youths, equally courageous, if not more so than himself. Bussy d'Amboise, favourite of Monsieur, the king's brother, happened to be in the suite of the duke his master, very simply attired, but followed by six pages dressed in cloth of gold, and well frizzed; when Bussy ex-*

claimed aloud, that the period was arrived when scoundrels ranked the bravest. The king was highly incensed at this insolent remark; and the duke of Alençon could not deny the request of his brother, that Bussy d'Amboise should for a certain period retire from the court.

History, says Anquetil, abstains from pronouncing on the species of taste which so intimately connected the king with his *mignons;* but it nevertheless details facts. Henry had such fondness for his favourites, that he was in the habit of embracing them more than familiarly before every body: he would decorate their persons with his own hands, put on their ruffs, and place the ear-rings in their ears. He did not permit them to leave him either by day or night: the former was spent with them in isolated apartments, inaccessible to all who were not in the secret of their proceedings; and during the latter they all reposed in little cells formed around a very spacious saloon, and separated only by the thinnest partitions, the king being frequently in the habit of selecting one of his *mignons* for his bedfellow. Friendship of this nature could not fail to awaken suspicions that were alike derogatory to all his accomplices.

The wife of Saint Luc, one of the *mignons,* beheld with disgust her young husband frequent a society that dishonoured him in public opinion, though the king was himself the chief. The links, however, formed by royalty, are not to be severed without incurring danger. Saint Luc

made his wife sensible of this truth; and then conceived the plan of infusing, even in the monarch, a distaste for his own enjoyments.

One night, Saint Luc, sleeping in his little cell near that of the king, slipped a speaking-trumpet to the head of the royal couch, when the monarch was yielding to his first sleep, and pronounced several menaces, as if on the part of Heaven, against Henry's irregularities. Upon this the king, awakening, listened attentively; but hearing nothing farther, conceived he had dreamt, and again composed himself to rest. Saint Luc then renewed his former threats; upon which Henry, convinced it was no visionary chimera, gave himself up to sad reflections, and appeared in the morning with every characteristic of remorse pictured on his countenance.

The courtiers, perceiving this change, knew not what to conjecture; and Saint Luc feigned to be equally embarrassed with the rest. Assuming, however, a bold air, he privately told the king, that during the night he had dreamed an angel appeared, with a very stern visage, and menaced him with speedy and inevitable ruin if he did not renounce his vile and vicious practices; after which he also solicited Henry to change his course of life. The king, in turn, recapitulated to the narrator what he had heard; and then commanding him to preserve the secret, promised to attend to the supposed celestial admonition, and insensibly began to estrange himself from his *mignons*.

The favourites were confounded at these proceedings, and searched to ascertain the cause: upon which Villequier, minister of the royal pleasures, employed himself more indefatigably than the rest, because his credit must necessarily suffer if the monarch persisted in his reformation. At length he succeeded in extorting the secret from Saint Luc, which he revealed to the king; who, irritated on finding that one of his favourites had sought to abuse his credulity, meditated the direst vengeance. This would, no doubt, have overtaken Saint Luc, had he not received timely notice of his danger and fled to Brouage, of which place he was governor; where he arrived only one hour before the individual who had been despatched by the king to displace him from the post in question.

From these disgusting and ridiculous puerilities arose the term *mignon;* notwithstanding which, those favourites were generally selected from the bravest youths of the court, the most scrupulous on points of honour, as well as the most gallant, and such as enjoyed the greatest success with the fair sex. To the monarch they confided their amours, who caused them to marry their mistresses; and on such occasions he attended the nuptials in person; which were splendid in the extreme, continuing to manifest the same favour after they were married. The king was not destitute of gallantry; and, as we have before remarked, until the period of his marriage he had entertained a most romantic and violent passion for a princess.

Nothing, however, could surpass the frivolity of Henry the Third; the various memoirs of his time state, that he took delight in superintending the toilette of his queen, and adorned her, like a waiting-woman; he was fond of precious stones and pearls, and equally delighted in his little dogs, which he purchased at very exorbitant prices. When we call to recollection the manners of that reign, and the madly exaggerated vows of friendship, we can feel surprised at nothing; and we may be permitted to infer, that in the midst of such menacing factions, this prince sought to attach to his person the most devoted friends, and was anxious to have them around him at all times. We can neither justify the frivolity of his taste and his mode of living, nor the ridiculous expenditures lavished on his favourite *mignons*, which, as we have previously observed, attached to his character suppositions of the most heinous nature. Certainly such infamy is not proved, and the historian therefore should neither flatter nor be guilty of calumny.

Monsieur, the king's brother, was at this period anxious to cultivate the friendship of every one. The Flemish, having in the first instance been satisfied with demanding, sword in hand, a restitution of their privileges from the tyranny of Philip the Second of Spain, afterwards came to the resolution of entirely abjuring his empire. They, however, hesitated upon two points: whether to place themselves only under the pro-

tection of a neighbouring power, capable of defending them, or to make choice of a new sovereign. The first was most gratifying to their feelings; but they were justly apprehensive that the title of protector, given to the prince whom they should select, would not be a motive sufficiently strong to make him enter upon the expenditures requisite to resist the power of Spain, which was collecting all its forces against them; for it is very rarely found that princes are gifted with disinterested compassion. This the Flemish had too fatally verified in the insufficiency of succours forwarded at different periods from France and England; assistance, intended less for their aid than originating in a desire to embarrass the Spanish government.

Prior to the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, the project of admiral Chatillon had been to render that war more burthensome to Philip, by opposing to him the united body of French Calvinists. This enterprise, as we have before remarked, while occupying the French, might have preserved the kingdom from those civil commotions which impoverished and stained it with blood. Philip, however, had proved sufficiently politic to foment the troubles that were productive of the massacre. It was from a similar motive that the same monarch supported the designs of the League, and those secret intrigues which caused the failure of the duke of Anjou's projects, who inherited the plans, but not the capacity of the admiral.

This prince had then the brightest prospects; every thing appeared to forward his views. Queen Elizabeth of England favoured his intentions, and wished, in appearance, to take a personal interest in his affairs, by inspiring hopes in the duke that she would be led to give him her hand in marriage. The Calvinists of France, the discontented, and all the young nobility, accustomed to arms, promised to enroll themselves under his banner as soon as he should take the field. Many had even anticipated him by joining Lanoue; several Flemish lords and the principal towns had secretly engaged to receive him, and did not refuse to proclaim him king of the Low Countries when he should be found sufficiently powerful to maintain that title.

Henry the Third could only gain by this enterprise, which gave occupation to Philip the Second, a dangerous neighbour, whose insidious projects had so frequently disturbed his repose. By this means he had also disentangled himself honourably from a turbulent brother; he procured an augmentation of power to France, and equally diminished that of Spain. And, finally, that which ought particularly to have determined his conduct, was, that he thus stifled in his kingdom, as it were, the seeds of rebellion, by giving employment elsewhere to those who had uniformly supported it. Consequently nothing but advantages presented themselves; and yet it was owing to himself that this grand project completely failed.

This has generally been attributed to the jealousy which the king entertained in consequence of the glory that would accrue to his brother in case of success. However, without disputing the feasibility of such a supposition, it appears that it was still more from the effect of an antipathy cherished by his favourites. The duke of Anjou took no delight in his brother's parties of pleasure, where he uniformly found himself surrounded by *mignons*, who bore away all the rewards, distinctions, and favours. He consequently forbore attending as much as politeness and his interests would permit; but, when compelled to be present, he could not divest himself of an air of *ennui* and contempt, highly displeasing to the favoured youths, while the king regarded these disdainful manners as an indirect censure upon his own taste and pursuits.

About this period the nuptials of Saint Luc, one of the leading favourites, of whom we have recently spoken, were solemnized; a ceremony rendered conspicuous from its scandalous profusion and the enormous expenditure. The duke of Anjou refused attendance on that occasion; yet, from motives of complaisance for the queen mother, he presented himself during the ball that took place in the evening, and had every reason to repent this civility. As the duke had appeared to despise the amusements of the day, the favourites were piqued, and offered him insults. Each in derision pointed with his finger at the prince, looked at him jeeringly, and spoke in his

ear sufficiently loud for him to understand that his stature, mien, and air, afforded topics for their pleasantries. The duke of Anjou was compelled to hear and witness all in silence, fearful of breaking with his brother, of whom he stood in need; and retired from the apartment with a heart bursting with spleen and anger. He immediately went to utter the chagrin he felt to his mother, and, in conjunction with her, resolved to absent himself for a few days, in order to calm his agitated feelings. Catherine accordingly offered to solicit leave of absence for the prince, which was readily granted by the king his brother.

On retiring, however, to the council with his young advisers, they filled the mind of their master with terror, persuading him that the duke only absented himself from court to join the malcontents and recommence hostilities. Full of this idea, the king flew to his mother, although the night was far advanced, exclaiming, "*How, madame! what do you think you required of me in soliciting permission for my brother's departure? Do you not perceive, in case he goes, the danger to which you expose my state? No doubt, there is some bold enterprise concealed under this measure; I am going to seize upon all his attendants, and will examine his coffers: I am convinced we shall discover great things.*" In vain did Catherine intercede to stop his precipitate measures; he would not listen to her entreaties. All she could do was to obtain his permission to accompany him, under the appre-

hension that some unfortunate event might occur between the brothers.

The king entered suddenly the chamber of Monsieur, ordered him to rise, then began to reproach him before he was certain of any culpability; commanded his caskets to be brought, and proceeded to examine the bed with his own hands, for the purpose of ascertaining whether he could not discover some hidden papers. The duke of Anjou, during the first moments of surprise, appeared anxious to hide a letter, which the king strove to obtain: the former supplicated his brother, with clasped hands, not to insist on its inspection; but the more he exhorted, the more obstinate was the king to peruse the document. At length Monsieur produced the letter, being only a billet from his mistress, which the prince, from motives of delicacy for the character of the lady, had sought to conceal from any eyes but his own. Henry was confused, but nevertheless put his brother under arrest; while Bussy d'Amboise was consigned to the Bastille with some of the duke of Anjou's courtiers, who were found in the Louvre.

The act had been committed; but on the ensuing day the monarch was led to more sober reflections. A grand council was convened, when the queen mother proceeded to lay before the ministers the probable consequences of such an outrageous proceeding. The eyes of the counsellors were in consequence opened, who then found it expedient to advise the king to

take his brother into favour. This was acceded to, on condition that Bussy should be on amicable terms with Caylus : the guards were in consequence discontinued ; and the duke of Anjou appeared before the king, to whom he protested his fidelity, entreating him to entertain for the future no suspicions against him, to which Henry gave his promise.

Bussy, in his turn, appeared, when the monarch commanded him to forget the misunderstanding that had existed, and to embrace his favourite Caylus; upon which Bussy replied: " Sire, if you wish me to kiss his cheek, I am perfectly willing :" when, accommodating his gestures to his speech, he proceeded to embrace Caylus with all the grimace and in the true style of pantaloon ; at which the courtiers, although astonished, and feeling chagrined for what had passed, could not repress their laughter. It was in this manner Henry the Third knew how to ensure the respect of his subjects!

We have pictured these scenes as well to delineate faithfully the manners of those times as to give a key to more important events that succeeded. These unceasing bickerings terminated by making the duke of Anjou resort to the expedient of really absenting himself from the court. He in consequence took refuge at Alençon, from whence he wrote to the king, stating that he had merely quitted Paris to superintend with greater facility the preparations carrying on for his enterprise in Flanders ; that he

had no intention of committing any act displeasing to his majesty, and he faithfully performed his word.

The queen mother did not suffer less than the rest on account of the *disorderly conduct, exceeding all bounds, of her son's mignons;* but she regarded his excessive partiality for them as a mere fancy which would soon subside; being no less convinced that their own insolence would soon avenge her. It was not long ere Catherine obtained complete satisfaction.

We do not find from history the motive of the quarrel that existed between the *mignon* Caylus, and Antraguet, a person closely attached to the Guises. Queen Margaret is supposed to have contributed to the misunderstanding which led to a fatal duel between the parties, who met to fight, having each two seconds: Maugiron, another of the royal *mignons*, and Livarot, on the part of Caylus; Schomberg and Riberac being the supporters of Antraguet.

The latter was the only combatant who escaped the affray without injury; Maugiron and Schomberg being left dead upon the field. Riberac expired the following day; Livarot was cured of a very dangerous wound, after a considerable lapse of time; and Caylus, pierced in nineteen places, languished thirty-one days, the wretched object of the king's unavailing affection, who scarcely quitted the bed of the sufferer. *Henry the Third had promised the surgeons who attended, a hundred thousand francs, in case*

they effected his cure, and to that handsome mignon, an hundred thousand crowns, if he would take courage so as to forward the efforts of the surgeons; notwithstanding which promises, however, he at length expired. The king was no less fond of Maugiron; *for he tenderly kissed them both after death, ordered their hair to be cut off, when he carried away their thick curly flaxen locks, and took the earrings from the ears of Caylus, which he had originally given him, having attached them with his own hands.* The monarch then sought to alleviate his grief, by having their bodies interred with a pomp truly royal, in the church of Saint Paul, and causing marble statues to be raised on their monuments.

Near these two *mignons* was shortly after entombed another favourite, named Caussade de Saint Megrin, whom the conduct of his predecessors did not render more cautious. This youth had the temerity to attack the Guises, whom he affected to hold in contempt. One day, being in the royal apartment, and in presence of the nobles, *he drew his sword, and uttering the most taunting expressions, severed his glove in two, adding, that he would in a similar manner cut in pieces those insignificant princes* (alluding to the Guises). Such imprudent conduct was, in itself, sufficient to ensure his downfal; but a more feasible cause is adduced as the forerunner of the catastrophe.

However attached to the king, and consequently on that account an enemy to the duke of Guise, Saint Megrin was passionately enamoured of the duchess, who is said to have re-

turned his affection. The author of this anecdote represents the duke as indifferent to the infidelity of his wife, whether real or pretended; that he was deaf to the representations of his family, which urged him to avenge himself, and that he only punished the indiscretion or crime of the duchess with a joke. One day entering her chamber at a very early hour, holding a goblet in one hand and a dagger in the other, after suddenly awaking his wife, and uttering many reproaches, he exclaimed in a furious tone, "*Resolve, madame: you must die either by poison or the dagger.*" In vain did the duchess entreat for mercy, he forced her to decide; when, taking the cup, she drank its contents, fell on her knees, and recommending her soul to God, awaited nothing less than the visitation of death. One hour transpired in this distressing manner, when the duke returned with a serene countenance, and informed her that what she had taken as poison was nothing more than some very rich gravy soup. There is little doubt but such a lesson made the duchess more circumspect in her conduct for the future.

We find the above anecdote narrated differently, by the son of Bassompiere, to Charles Maurice le Tellier, archbishop of Rheims, who inserted it in the margin of the manuscript of De Thou which was the property of Rigault; this narrative running as follows:—

Cardinal Guise, and the duke of Mayenne, witnessing the noise which the intrigue of the

duchess with Saint Megrin gave rise to with the public, conceived that the duke their brother should not be the only individual unacquainted with the circumstance. As he had no friend more intimate than Bassompiere, that gentleman was commissioned to break the matter to him. Bassompiere, fully acquainted with the genius and character of the duke, did not accept the commission till after great persuasion, and against his own will; and he even requested three days in order to consider on the means best calculated to insinuate this unwelcome news to the duke. At length he accosted him with a melancholy and thoughtful air; when, the duke having inquired the reason of his sadness, "*Some few days back,*" replied Bassompiere, "*a friend consulted me as to the means most expedient for him to adopt in order to advertise his friend of the misconduct of his wife, who dishonoured him without his entertaining the least suspicion as to her gallantries. The question appeared to me so embarrassing, that to the present period I have not been able to make up my mind upon the subject; and such, my lord, is the source of the chagrin which I have not been able to conceal from your observation. Feeling disquiet respecting the answer I ought to make, I seek in vain for a decision; but as the occasion presents itself so opportunely to consult you on the point, I should be happy to learn from yourself what advice I ought to give my friend on a subject involving so much delicacy?*"

Having listened in silence, the duke of Guise,

who perfectly understood the allusions of his friend, nevertheless appeared quite unembarrassed, and thus replied: "*Whatsoever the person may be of whom you speak, if a friend, or even should he wish to appear such, let him take upon himself to avenge the injury done to his friend: but, under similar circumstances, to tell a friend that of which he is ignorant, is, in my opinion, a useless labour, and even adding a fresh outrage to the first. As for myself,*" continued the duke, "*God has blessed me with a wife as virtuous as it is possible for a woman to be, and, thanks to heaven, I have no cause to suspect her fidelity. If, however, it so happened that she went astray, and that any man was bold enough to break the secret to me; you see this steel—*" added the duke, placing his hand upon the hilt of his sword: "*the life of such an imprudent friend should instantly answer for his rash temerity.*" Bassompiere thanked the duke for his advice, and immediately after detailed the result to the cardinal and the duke of Mayenne, who accordingly resolved to act in the affair themselves.

An ambuscade was accordingly stationed near the gate of the Louvre, and as Saint Megrin issued from the palace at night, the assassins rushed upon his person and stretched him upon the pavement pierced by thirty-five wounds; he, however, lived until the ensuing day. The king had the same expensive funeral rites performed as for Maugiron and Caylus, and he was also interred in the church of Saint Paul with as much pomp and magnificence, and a

marble effigy placed over his tomb; upon which account, when any question was started in public concerning a new favourite, the common proverb was, *I will have him carved in marble like the rest.*

The king of Navarre was of opinion that the duke of Guise had assisted at this murder, and on receiving the news he said: "*I am heartily satisfied with the duke of Guise, my cousin, for not having permitted a gallant mignon, like Saint Megrin, to make him a c—k—d with impunity. In this manner all the other little beaux of the court should be dealt with, who take upon themselves to approach princesses and make love to them.*"

The more Henry the Third by these funeral honours displayed attachment to his favourites, equally so in proportion did he encourage others to dare his power; because, while betraying so much sensibility, he never sought to avenge their deaths. Far from having recourse to justice against similar crimes, like his subjects, whose licentious conduct it became his duty to repress, the monarch himself had also recourse to similar expedients in order to rid himself of such as were obnoxious to him. The famous Bussy d'Amboise, his brother's favourite, who, as we have previously shewn, had long braved the king, shared the fate of these arrogant upstarts, who, conceiving they might with impunity insult others, made a trophy of their insolence, and perished by the hands of those whom they despised.

Bussy had carried on an intrigue with the lady of Montsoreau; and the king found means to

procure letters of the gallant, and laid them before her husband. These documents verified the truth of the connexion, and were couched in terms of irony and insult as regarded the husband. Montsoreau, burning with resentment, dragged his wife to an isolated castle, and urged her by force to make an assignation there with her lover, who repaired to the place of *rendezvous* with his accustomed confidence; but instead of experiencing the good fortune he had expected, he found himself surrounded by assassins; when, after a long and gallant defence of his person, he fell overpowered by numbers, and was killed.

Bussy d'Amboise was regretted by no one, not even the duke of Anjou, his master, who began to feel disgusted at his overbearing insolence. It was a common report that the duke was made acquainted with, and consented to the plan laid for his murder; which verifies the old proverb: "Happy those who do not associate with princes; unhappy such as serve them, and still more unfortunate those who chance to offend them."

While on the subject of these assassinations, we must not omit to mention that of Dugast, one of the best-beloved *mignons* of the king, who fell by order of queen Margaret. This sacrifice was the more unpardonable, as Dugast, from his excellent qualities, merited universal esteem. Brantome, speaking of this gentleman, says: "Far from flattering the king, *he remonstrated with him when he saw him commit any outrageous acts, or*

heard complaints made of his conduct; when Henry, in such cases, acquiesced, and corrected himself." The death of Dugast was calculated to render Margaret of Navarre odious; but having cause for personal complaint against that favourite, and as resentment was then a sufficient apology for every act, the public was more astonished at the boldness of the deed than indignant at the atrocity of the crime; and this murder, combined with the most scandalous irregularities, has not prevented Sully from extolling the good qualities and character of that worthless princess.

It is true, Margaret conducted herself extremely well during the affair of her divorce from Henry the Fourth, and from that period with great integrity and disinterestedness in every thing that bore reference to that monarch; and it is doubtless on that account Sully never speaks of Margaret but in terms of praise.

During this licentiousness on the part of Henry the Third and the disorders of his court, the conditions of the peace were very ill observed on either side; so that hostilities and festivals succeeded each other with extraordinary celerity. Each party mutually retook or refused to surrender up small towns promised or ceded by the treaty. Sully, who was then in the suite of his master, learned, as he says, *the business of a courtier, then very new to him, as well as the figure of a ballet, which was taught him by the king's sister.* Henry of Navarre conducted the queen

mother into the province of Foix, where, among other diversions, he amused her with a bear hunt. "*The delicacy of the ladies,*" says Sully, "*did not coincide with this kind of spectacle; those terrible animals dismembering horses, and killing ten Swiss and as many fusileers. One bear, being driven to the summit of a rugged rock, threw himself from the eminence with several huntsmen, whom he held in his embrace, and crushed them to death.*"

The court of the king of Navarre and that of Catherine incessantly appointed meetings in various places, except at Paris, where Henry would not trust himself. It had been agreed on either side, that no hostilities should take place where the courts were stationed; and those limits generally did not exceed more than one or two leagues, which was deemed sufficient for the purposes of amusement without fear of molestation. Within those limits each party loaded the opposite faction with politeness and marks of friendship; but when removed from thence, hostilities took place, which were carried on with sanguinary animosity. However, during this association of the two courts, *Catherine never forgot to alienate from the king of Navarre a portion of his catholic officers.* It was in this manner she brought over successively Lavardin, Grammont, Duras, and many others; while at the same time she strove to create animosities between those who continued faithful to the interests of Henry of Navarre. As the queen mother possessed a peculiar talent in this way, she

very frequently succeeded; and the consequence was repeated duels. When it so occurred that a particular circumstance gave rise to any pointed subject of discontent, the uniform cry was, perfidy, as regarded such proceedings in time of peace; and on these occasions the courts quarrelled, and separated precipitately: but the influence of pleasure on the one hand, and the necessity of intrigue on the other, very soon tended to restore harmony.

In the month of February 1579, new interpretations were applied to several articles of the edict of pacification, nearly all of which were favourable to the Calvinists; and fresh places of surety given them, to be surrendered up in the August following. During this year a tragic event, then so common, took place, which gave rise to fresh causes of distrust in the minds of the two factions. Henry viscount Turenne, who had embraced Calvinism and the cause of the king of Navarre, was attacked by assassins, and received twenty-two sword wounds; an event that filled Henry with emotions of rage and anguish. Turenne had early attached himself to that prince; he had proved the companion of his dangers, his glory, and his pleasures; the conformity of their ages, sentiments, tastes, and religious opinions, had united them in the closest manner; and the consequence was, they lived together like brothers. These friendly feelings on his side proved uniformly as generous and faithful as they were ardent and sincere. Ca-

therine was uniformly suspected of having been accessary to this assassination; and she repaired to Agen for the express purpose of justifying herself. Henry of Navarre could not repress his poignant reproaches; the queen protested her innocence: she even offered to see the viscount, who was at the point of death, and to preside over the necessary cares of which his wounds stood in need. "*No, madame,*" answered Henry, "*I will confide to no one, but myself, the care of a friend who is so dear to me;*" and on that very day, the prince had his friend conveyed away in a litter. The viscount was transported to Nerac, at which place the king of Navarre shut himself up with Turenne, whom he never quitted until his perfect recovery was effected: and this nobleman frequently after repeated, that he was indebted for his life to the unremitting cares and assiduities of the king. Of what utility was not this heroic friendship subsequently productive to France, since Henry of Navarre afterwards caused his friend to espouse the inheretrix of Sedan and Bouillon, the fruit of which union proved the great Turenne.

At the termination of the year, marshal de Montmorency was sent to the king of Navarre to procure the restitution of those places of security yielded up to the Huguenots for six months only; but as the catholics had already, in several instances, violated the treaty, the answer given to this demand was a declaration of war. On witnessing the bad faith of the

court, Henry of Navarre had already prepared for that event, by taking measures with the prince of Condé, Lesdiguieres, Turenne, and the other Calvinist lords, in order that he might not be unexpectedly attacked. This most useful foresight originated in the penetration of Henry; for without the timely wisdom of several precautions which he adopted, his cause would have been completely annihilated. The reformers no longer balanced in regard to taking up arms, as soon as they ascertained that the catholics had, on a sudden, possessed themselves of several towns, and, among others, Figeac, the castle of which place was in a state of siege, and the king of Navarre, in consequence, despatched viscount Turenne to raise it, when the enemy, confounded at such unexpected alacrity on the part of the Huguenots, retired.

The prince of Condé, having had a misunderstanding with the king of Navarre, took possession of La Fere in Picardy, where he left a commander, and then proceeded to Germany to raise troops for the purpose of returning to France at the head of a foreign army. Admiral Coligny had familiarized most of his adherents to this crime, one of the greatest it is possible to commit against the mother country. The city of Mante in Gevaudan, was scaled on the eve of Christmas, by captain Merle; and at the same time, Montaigu, in Lower Poitou, surrendered himself to Pommier, a commander of Gascony; both of whom were Calvinists; but the most

brilliant and glorious action was, the attack and taking of Cahors by the king of Navarre.

This vast and populous town, says Sully, is situated on the river Lot, which surrounds it on all sides, serving the place as a moat, except on the north side. Previous to attacking this city, Henry assembled his council of war at Montauban, which was composed of captains no less brave than experienced, the whole of whom deemed the enterprise not only hazardous, but replete with temerity. The government of Cahors was vested in the commander Vezins, of whose noble conduct we have previously spoken towards his enemy Regnier, during the massacre of Saint Bartholomew. Vezins was deemed an experienced captain, and a man of the greatest personal courage; he had a garrison consisting of two thousand men, besides an hundred cavaliers well mounted, with a number of armed inhabitants, always upon their guard, and whom it was impossible to take by surprise; in short, the city was in the most favourable situation to admit of an obstinate defence, and Henry to attack the place had very inferior troops under his command. The king replied to his council, that the reasons which particularly tempted him to this enterprise were the peculiar difficulties which presented themselves: that if success attended the effort it would give the greatest *éclat* to his party, and that such a commencement would raise the courage and confidence of the troops to the highest pitch. In short, added he,

nothing is impossible for me to accomplish with men so brave as those whom I consult. Some further representations were made to the king, but he persisted in his opinions with unshaken firmness. Henry reinforced his troops, (diminished by desertion and the absence of many of his generals,) by all the men he could collect from Montauban, Negrépelisse, Saint Antonin, Gajare, and Seneviere; at the head of whom he marched from Montauban, and arrived at midnight within a quarter of a league of Cahors. It was the month of June; the heat proved excessive, and there was much thunder, without being accompanied by rain. The king of Navarre halted his forces in a wood of nut-trees, watered by a rivulet, which proved of the greatest utility in assuaging the thirst of his troops. In this spot Henry arranged the plan of operations and attack, after taking the precaution to send word to captain Schouppes to join him as speedily as possible; which, however, could not take place, till after the lapse of four or five days. All things being in readiness, *two petardeers*, supported by ten of the most determined soldiers of the prince's guard, took the lead to open a passage into the city. These were closely followed by twenty resolute foot soldiers, and thirty horse, all of the royal body-guard, conducted by Saint Martin, their commander; and the corps then followed, consisting of forty gentlemen, headed by Roquelaure, and sixty troops of the guard; young Rosny constituting one of this brigade.

The king of Navarre, at the head of two hundred men separated into four bands, followed; and the rest of the little army, consisting of a thousand to twelve hundred arquebusiers, in six platoons, closed the march. It was necessary to force three gates, which they began to assail with petards; after which hatchets were resorted to; but the openings effected proved so narrow, that the first who entered were compelled to effect the passage *by sliding on their bellies.* The thunder, which during that period augmented in a dreadful degree, favoured the besiegers; for the horrible clatter, being confounded with the explosion of the petards, prevented the garrison, in the first instance, from ascertaining that their gates were shattered, and in parts broken in; but speedily aware of the attack, the inhabitants sounded the tocsin, and the populace flew to the governor, who had just retired to rest, when, springing from his bed, he hastily seized his arms, without dressing himself, issued forth half naked, and was killed at the first discharge. Forty armed soldiers, and about two hundred arquebusiers partly accoutred, ran in search of the assailants, by the lightning's glare, for the purpose of disputing with the enemies their entrance into the city; but it was too late, for the king of Navarre's men were already in the streets of Cahors. The ringing of the bells, however, which warned the citizens to defend themselves, produced an instantaneous effect; the dwellings were covered by an immense concourse of peo-

ple, who precipitated from thence logs of wood, tiles, and articles of furniture, while redoubled cries were heard of, "*Charge, kill,*" &c. *It is impossible,* says Sully, *to form any idea of the confusion and horrid uproar which this unexpected assault produced;* the desperate fury of the besieged, the intrepidity of the assailants, and the tumultuous cries, conjoined with the roaring of the thunders, ringing of bells, clashing of arms, and stones falling like hail, amidst the most tempestuous night, the heat being oppressive to suffocation. This first tremendous shock continued upwards of a quarter of an hour; Rosny was stretched on the earth by a large stone hurled from a window; but instantly raised up by the faithful *La Trappe, his valet de chambre,* who never abandoned his master in the heat of battle. The king's troops advanced but slowly; because, the enemy's platoons, overthrown or defeated, were immediately replaced by fresh bands of soldiers. Previous to gaining the great square of the city, Henry had already been twelve times engaged in regular battles. Rosny's *cuisses* having become detached in the heat of the conflict, he was wounded in the thigh, which did not, however, prevent him from fighting with his accustomed bravery. The royal forces at length arrived at the great square; where high barricadoes had been raised, which it was found necessary to overthrow; an effort accomplished with infinite difficulty, the assailants having to support continual discharges from the artillery, which had

been ranged as a battery for their defence. The king, covered with blood and wounds, uniformly headed his troops during every attack, in the course of which *he broke two halberts, while all his other arms were imprinted with the marks of bullets, and dented with blows from different weapons.*

Enough had already been accomplished to procure the renown of a great victory, adds the historian and eye-witness of this memorable enterprise; *but it might with truth be said, that the conflict, as yet, was hardly begun.* The city being of great extent and filled with so many combatants, in comparison with such a multitude, the king's forces appeared a mere handful. It was necessary to renew the battle at every cross-way, and force new barriers, that had been constructed to impede the enemy's advance: happily for the king of Navarre, the garrison, being deprived of its chief, attacked and defended itself with more desperate obstinacy than generalship, while, relying on superiority of numbers, and awaiting an expected reinforcement, it was constantly occupied in endeavouring to save lives, conceiving that the enemy could not escape, and that fatigue alone would soon suffice to complete its extermination. *It will scarce be credited,* says Sully, *that five whole days and nights were spent in this sanguinary exercise;* during which period, no warrior of the king's troop dared to leave his arms for a moment, nor quit his post to partake of refreshment, or enjoy a few minutes' repose, but in supporting his body upright

against the walls of the houses. To fatigue, exhaustion, the weight of armour, sultry heat, attacks of hunger, and above all, excessive thirst, were added galling wounds, all of which combined to destroy Henry's forces. There was not a soldier whose feet were not so wounded and clogged with gore, that he with difficulty supported himself. In this dire extremity, his majesty's principal officers approached the king, and advised him to collect his whole troop round his person in order to cut a passage through the enemy and accomplish a retreat; and they redoubled their supplications, on hearing the news that was spread, and which was true, that the succours expected by the inhabitants were on the point of arriving at the barrier; but the intrepid prince, whom nothing could subdue, *getting the better of the anguish occasioned by his wounds, turned towards his officers with a calm and serene air, and contented himself by replying: "It is registered above what must become of me upon this trying occasion. Remember that my retreat from this city, without securing it to our party, will be the flight of my soul from my body. My honour is too much connected with the result that it should prove otherwise; therefore, speak to me but of fighting, conquering, or dying."*

Reanimated by the words and example of this heroic chief, the whole corps enthusiastically swore to obey him; and, in the course of the day, the fortunate arrival of captain Schouppes and his corps restored to the soldiers all their

accustomed bravery. This commander forced a passage through the city with five or six hundred arquebusiers and an hundred horse, overthrowing the enemy, in every direction, who presented themselves to impede his passage, and thus rejoined the king. The duke of Sully agrees that without this timely succour Henry must inevitably have yielded to superior forces. The name of the intrepid captain Schouppes, whose memory should be venerated by all Frenchmen, has not been sufficiently made known in history; the most feeble voice may immortalize him by saying, that during this eventful day, Schouppes had the good fortune and the glory to rescue Henry the Great of France. Having effected this important junction, the king of Navarre proceeded with his troops to the barrier, where the enemy's reinforcement had also come up, the whole of that quarter of the town still continuing to hold out. Henry, on this occasion, finding himself the besieger and the besieged, faced every opposition with admirable promptitude, defending himself against the internal enemy, and making arrangements to expel those from without. Having become master of the towers and parapets, he there stationed several small corps, to close up a passage to the town from without, while he continued to combat with the assailants within the city. In this instance, the good wishes of his men so ably seconded his activity, prudence, and courage, that the reinforcement was compelled to seek for safety in a precipitate

flight; when, the inhabitants, confounded on beholding such repeated prodigies of valour, on a sudden abandoned all hope and courage, and surrendered up their arms. The city was given up to pillage, the soldiery, however, being ordered, under pain of death, to commit no personal violence; a command which Henry uniformly issued upon such occasions, but which, considering the cruel toleration of plunder, appears more calculated to calm in some measure the conscience of the general, than save the lives of the wretched population. The duke of Sully says, *that good fortune placed at his disposal a small iron coffer, wherein he found four thousand gold crowns.*

Who can refrain from shuddering when he contemplates the manner in which war was carried on in those barbarous times by the most generous-minded and honourable men! The Du Guesclins and the Bayards were not blessed with similar good fortune, or, more strictly speaking, they held it in abhorrence.

The king of Navarre, during these reiterated conflicts, and such a procrastinated resistance, only lost seventy-two men; but the number of sufferers extended throughout his whole army. Henry, covered with wounds, had received none of a dangerous nature; his garments were so pierced and ragged, that they literally dropped to pieces: on the side of the besieged the loss was infinitely greater.

The duke de Sully concludes his account of this memorable exploit with the following words:—

I am compelled to suppress a variety of particular circumstances and feats, as well of the king as on the part of his officers, which would almost appear like so many fabulous narrations.

CHAPTER VIII.

The prince of Condé abandons Henry's cause.—The king of Navarre holds his court at Nerac.—Young Rosny's temerity rebuked.—His embassy to the king's sister.—Noble conduct of marshal Biron towards Henry of Navarre.—Character of marshal Biron.—Rosny and his master on the point of separating, but afterwards reconciled.—Views of the queen mother for the duke of Alençon.—Rosny joins the duke of Alençon, and Henry's opinion of that prince.—Capture of Cateau Cambresis.—Alençon visits the court of queen Elizabeth.—Is crowned duke of Brabant at Antwerp.—Attempted assassination of the prince of Orange.—Treacherous conduct of the duke of Alençon at Antwerp, and his expulsion from the Low Countries.—Henry's love for the countess de Guiche.—Honourable conduct of Henry, and duplicity of the queen mother.—Henry's adventure with captain Michau.—Death of the duke of Alençon.—His character.—Anecdote of that prince, as narrated by queen Margaret.—Plans of the queen mother and the duke of Guise respecting the throne.—Attempts of Henry the Third to make the king of Navarre abandon his religion.—Henry the Third signs a treaty of peace with the League, and employs his army under Joyeuse against the king of Navarre.—Henry's apprehensions in consequence of the peace.—Private interests of his friends.—Devotedness of Rosny in serving his prince.—Manifestoes of Henry.—He challenges the duke of Guise.—Bill of excommunication against Henry published at Rome.—Unfortunate state of his affairs.—He repairs to Rochelle.—Surrender of Talmont to Henry of Navarre.—Loyalty of Henry towards the queen mother.—Proceedings of the Leaguers.—Hatred of the duchess of

Montpensier for Henry the Third.—Conspiracies against Henry the Third.—The duke de Joyeuse despatched against Henry of Navarre.—Description of the two armies prior to the battle of Coutras.—Celebrated battle of Coutras gained by Henry, and death of Joyeuse.—Interested views of the Calvinist princes.

THE taking of the city of Cahors is one of those extraordinary events that have few parallels in history. This achievement astonished all Europe, and although it was universally allowed that the enterprise had been characterized by extreme rashness, nevertheless that very imprudence wherewith Henry was reproached, spread astonishing lustre over the young hero's character, who had at the same time displayed in his conduct, and all the details of this miraculous enterprise, inconceivable activity, hardihood, admirable presence of mind, and very superior talents for the art of war.

The king of Navarre, having appointed Cobriere to the command of Cahors, returned to Montauban; and shortly after defeated two or three corps of the army of marshal Biron. About this period, however, the prince was poignantly afflicted on receiving very inauspicious intelligence; for the prince of Condé, not content with having alienated a portion of his troops, and separated from his party in the most conspicuous manner, had drawn over to his side some cities of Dauphiny and Languedoc, of which he deprived Henry, in order to compose for himself a sovereignty; while it was equally rumoured that he

had taken possession of La Fere. Henry of Navarre, whose army was already so inferior to that of the catholics, was farther compelled to dismember it; he commanded the march of Turenne, who disconcerted all the plans of the prince of Condé; but it was no longer in the power of the king of Navarre to keep the field against marshal Biron. The prince, therefore, shut himself up in the town of Nerac, *where the ladies and all the court of Navarre then resided,* uniformly brilliant, notwithstanding the inauspicious state of the monarch's affairs. This war, without being strictly entitled to the name of a campaign in the open field, or a siege, at the same time partook of both. Biron had stated that the siege of Nerac, maintained by Henry, was an imprudent enterprise, and he nevertheless contented himself with creating alarm in that town, by encamping soldiers in the environs. The king of Navarre, thus blockaded, made frequent sallies; but all the brave youths, glowing with noble pride in consequence of the brilliant exploit of Cahors, frequently issued from the place without the king's permission, in order to attack separate detachments of the royalists, sometimes proceeding to the very front of the opposing army. Young Rosny, as was customary with him, aided at one of these bravadoes, where neither honour nor glory were to be acquired; on which occasion they were severely taken to task by the prince. Henry was one day informed that Rosny had been wounded and made prisoner, upon which

he instantly despatched a party of officers to liberate the youth, if it was not too late. He was accordingly conducted back in safety, when the king, in anger, expressly commanded his pupil never to leave the town without his permission, annexing to him the epithets of *heedless and presumptuous.* The king not only tutored Rosny for war, but he had equally directed him to give in a regular account of the expenditure of his military gains, and of his expenses in general; which the pupil performed with the greatest exactitude. Henry was particularly struck with the order and strict economy which the young man combined with liberality; and the duke de Sully says in his Memoirs, that he felt persuaded he was indebted to those reflections on the part of his sovereign, for the idea he afterwards entertained of confiding to his care the financial departments of the kingdom. The monarch made trial of all the talents and intelligence of Rosny, and in the sequel commissioned him to undertake a very delicate negotiation near the person of the princess his sister; the affair in question having for its object the making her relinquish the design of espousing the count of Soissons, with whom she was in love. Rosny, at that period only a youth, acquitted himself of his commission with a dexterity which Henry, no doubt, afterwards called to mind when he despatched him on his embassy to the court of Elizabeth of England. During the war he frequently entrusted him with the command of artillery, together with the defence

and fortifying of various places, and in particular Monsegur in the territory of Foix. It was in this year, 1580, that Rosny put that town in so good a state of defence, that the king of Navarre publicly expressed the most flattering praises towards him on that account. This generous prince, by his caresses and the munificent acts wherewith he loaded Rosny, taught him to know the exact difference that existed between military actions that are prescribed by duty, and those which are only the result of imprudent and fiery courage.

Towards the end of the campaign, marshal Biron feigned a desire to lay siege to Nerac; but the whole terminated in some exploits of the moment, of which the ladies of the court were frequently witnesses from the summit of the ramparts. All historians have remarked, that marshal Biron, (father of the nobleman who played so conspicuous and unfortunate a part, as will be found under the reign of Henry the Fourth) one of the most experienced captains of his time, never acted against the king of Navarre with that vigour he might have displayed; it seems as if he had had a presentiment, that Henry of Bourbon would one day establish the throne, and rescue the realm of France. Independent of this, the great qualifications of the prince had commanded Biron's admiration; while even policy impelled him to consider the king of Navarre, as well as spare the Huguenots, but it was uniformly, without abandoning the cause of his

religion and his king. He always displayed a wise moderation, and exerted all his efforts to engage his sovereign freely to accord liberty of conscience to the reformers; he foresaw that the indolence of Henry the Third would infallibly ruin France; and that the destruction of the Calvinists, in causing the triumph of the Guises and their faction, would annihilate all the obstacles which were opposed to the ambitious views of that aspiring family. Biron, in his youth, had been reared in quality of page to Margaret of Valois, queen of Navarre, sister of Francis the First, (mother of Jeanne d'Albret,) and grandmother of Henry the Fourth. That princess, the most accomplished of her time, having observed in young Biron great talent and judgment, took delight in having him well educated under her own direction, of which he well knew how to profit. This gift, the most precious of all, inspired in Biron's mind the profoundest gratitude, which he preserved during his life, and testified upon every occasion by his attachment for the family of that princess, and above all for Henry of Bourbon. This conduct and these sentiments caused him to be unjustly accused of having secretly embraced the Calvinist persuasion; and he would, in consequence, have become one of the victims of the Saint Bartholomew massacre, if, as before stated, he had not adopted the precaution of shutting himself up in the arsenal, of which he was governor, and where he maintained himself with the most determined courage.

Marshal Biron was fond of magnificence, generous, and very well informed; he was perfect master of the Greek and Latin languages, partial to reading, and, according to Brantome, accustomed to write down every thing he heard of an interesting nature; *so that, if any one uttered a good thing*, it was remarked, "*You have taken that from the tablets of Biron;*" *and the king's jester, named Greffier, frequently used to swear by the divine tablets of Biron.*

We find from history, that upon the marshal's being installed a knight of the order of the Holy Ghost, he said to the king, when presenting his titles of nobility: "*Sire, in these are comprised my titles of nobility,*" and then placing his hand on his sword, he continued, "*but here, Sire, they are still more firmly established.*"

Biron limped in his gait in consequence of a wound he had received; so that after the battle of Montcontour, according to Brantome, the peace was called *the lame*, or MAL ASSISE, *ill seated*, in consequence of its having been negotiated by Biron with *M. de Malassise*. The marshal was equally munificent and charitable: it is stated of him, that the persons who managed his affairs having proposed the dismissal of several useless attendants, he replied: "You demonstrate perfectly well that I can do without them, but it is above all necessary you should prove that they can equally exist without me."

The war still continued for some time between the king of Navarre and the royal army, com-

manded by marshal Biron, says Sully; but no affair of importance took place. At this period, a very just cause of discontent on the part of Henry of Navarre against Rosny, had nearly put a period to the most faithful and perfect friendship of which history affords an example. The king entertained a great contempt for duels, and had just issued fresh orders throughout his army prohibiting such encounters, having interdicted them on former occasions. Rosny, however, had the temerity to assist as the second of Beauvais, son of the governor of Navarre, who fought against an officer named Usseau, when the latter received a dangerous wound: Henry, who was very partial to Beauvais, was doubly incensed at Rosny on this occasion, not only for having concealed the intended meeting, but also accompanied the combatants to the field of action. In his indignation, addressing Rosny, he said, that if he awarded strict justice, he should command his head to be struck off. Rosny, whose feelings were sensibly touched at this threat, replied, that he was neither his subject nor his vassal; adding, that he should quit his service, and absent himself from his presence for ever: but the princesses (queen Margaret, and Catherine, the king's sister) retained him, under the promise of effecting peace. The king, who had kept a disdainful silence during this impetuous sally, condescended to listen, and accepted Rosny's excuses: for some time, however, he treated him with great coolness, but afterwards, when fully con-

vinced that he felt acutely the weight of his fault, he again entertained towards him his former sentiments of esteem: "*Such generous conduct,*" says Sully, "*teaching me how much this kind prince merited to be served with devotedness, made me resolve from that moment never to acknowledge any other master.*"

The queen mother, however, resolved to terminate the war; her ambition and designs for the duke of Alençon, the last of her sons, rendered pacific measures absolutely necessary; she was anxious to ensure to the duke the sovereignty of the Low Countries; and, in a memoir said to be the production of De Thou, book 96, we find it stated that before the duke of Anjou had been called to the court of Poland, Catherine, who was anxious at any price to behold him a monarch, had despatched Francis de Noailles to require of the Grand Signor the kingdom of Algiers for that prince. To this was to be added Sardinia, obtained from the Spanish monarch in exchange for the kingdom of Navarre, of which she ensured possession to that court, while, by way of an equivalent to the king of Navarre for his right to that kingdom, other possessions were to have been ceded to the prince appertaining to the French territory.

Peace being concluded, Rosny obtained permission from the king of Navarre to go to Coutras in the suite of the duke of Alençon, where that prince assembled a brilliant retinue of nobles and gentlemen, in order to appear with the necessary

splendour in the Low Countries, of which territory the deputies of the United Provinces had tendered him the sovereignty. In demanding this leave of absence from Henry, it is necessary to state that Rosny was not merely impelled from motives of joining the court of the duke of Alençon; having, independent of that circumstance, claims to certain property in Flanders, which was the principal motive for his undertaking the journey.

When soliciting this permission, Rosny added, that if upon the most trifling occasion the king should stand in need of his attendance, he would rejoin him at the first command. Henry, during their conference, displayed that sagacity so essentially necessary to monarchs, and which led him to form so just an estimation of those who approached his person. In speaking of the duke of Alençon, the king said, "He will deceive me, if he fulfils the hopes that have been entertained respecting him; he possesses so little courage, his heart is so deceitful and sly, there is such a want of grace in his demeanour, and a lack of expertness in all manly exercises, that I can never be led to think he is capable of performing any thing that is truly noble."

The event fully justified this estimate: Rosny repaired to the duke of Alençon, when a battle was fought in Flanders, and Cateau Cambresis taken. Upon this occasion the prince ordered that no violence should be offered to the females; and fearful lest his commands might produce no more

effect on the brutality of the soldiers than the plague with which the fortress was infected, he gave them churches by way of asylums, and stationed safeguards. Rosny was in the act of traversing a street, when a young and lovely female precipitated herself into his arms, supplicating that he would protect her person from the violence of some troops who were posted in ambuscade for the purpose of seizing her. Rosny immediately offered to conduct her to a church; when she replied, that there she should not be admitted, because it was known she was infected by the plague. At these words, Rosny, more frightened than herself, pushed her from him, saying, that she possessed in her own person the best safeguard possible.

The duke of Alençon, who, to acquire popular opinion in his favour, had in the first instance testified great humanity, after a short lapse of time displayed a perfidy which covered him with universal shame. He repaired to England, where Elizabeth charmed him with romantic festivities, and filled his mind with brilliant hopes; from thence he returned to Zealand, and was crowned duke of Brabant in the city of Antwerp, commanded by the prince of Orange. This potentate gave the duke of Alençon proofs of the most disinterested and generous friendship; he powerfully contributed to his election, and was personally at the ceremony of his inauguration. The duke and the French still occupied the court and the city of Antwerp, when the prince of Orange experienced

the fate of nearly all the princes of that period, being struck by the hand of an assassin. Jean Jauregui, by birth a Biscayan, shot the prince with a pistol, the ball from which pierced his jaws completely through; when the attendants of the prince killed the murderer upon the spot. The populace, who, in the first instance, accused the French as guilty of the crime, were anxious to rise *en masse*, and exterminate them; and the duke of Alençon found no safety but in seeking refuge at the palace of the wounded prince. The injustice of this suspicion was, however, soon proved; for on examination of the body of the assassin letters were found hidden in his apparel which identified him as being a Spaniard. The citizens, in a body, then presented themselves to the duke of Alençon, offering their humble excuses; notwithstanding which this outrage had implanted in the heart of the prince such rooted hatred and resentment, that he secretly determined on dealing the most signal vengeance; the prince of Orange, who narrowly observed his conduct from that moment, kept upon his guard.

Having ordered his forces into the open field, the duke of Alençon quitted Antwerp in the month of February, 1583, under pretext of passing the army in review; but he afterwards commanded his troops suddenly to re-enter the gates of the city, (which, from motives of confidence and hospitality, were left at his disposition,) and

to take forcible possession of the town. These orders the troops faithfully obeyed, entering Antwerp, like a city taken by assault, with cries of "*Kill, kill; a city gained!*" This triumph, however, was of short duration; the prince of Orange had taken his precautions, and, according to Sully, issued such salutary orders, which were executed with so much ardour and celerity, that the duke's forces were driven back, cut in pieces, and precipitated from the heights; for terror having got possession of their minds, those who could not escape by the gates, which were blocked up by the quantity of dead bodies, threw themselves from the ramparts. In this tumult, Rosny was saved through the interference of the prince of Orange, who retained him in his own palace. The duke of Alençon immediately fled for refuge to the environs of Malines, where the inhabitants, by opening the sluices, had made one vast swamp, and in consequence from four to five thousand men perished from sickness, hunger, and cold; while nearly all the horses remained buried in the mud. In this deplorable condition the duke of Alençon obstinately continued for several months, struggling against the effects of shame and public indignation. At length he retired from the Low Countries, leaving a recollection of the most odious enterprise, and the memorial of a name justly held in universal detestation.

In the years 1582 and 1583 the king of Na-

varre took no part in the affairs of the French court. During that period he was uniformly occupied in study and useful reflections, while salutary conversations with his friends, whom he well knew how to select, occupied the greater part of his leisure; nor could love and gallantry ever wean him from indulging in such serious occupations.

Sully, speaking of Henry at this period, says, "*He was then at the height of his passion for Corisande d'Audoin;*" of which lady and Henry's amour we find the following account in the work of M. Sauval, on the gallantries of the kings of France, vol. i. p. 304. "During the excursion of Henry the Third into Guienne, the king of Navarre went to join him at Bourdeaux, where he became acquainted with the countess de Guiche, widow of Philibert count de Gramont, who was killed at the siege of La Fere. Henry found that lady very amiable, and paid her several visits during his residence in the province, and sought consolation in her company for the infidelity of Madame de Sauve. The prince soon perceived that she was not insensible to his passion, and requested, on leaving Bourdeaux, that a correspondence with him might be kept up through the medium of Parabese, whom he had taken into his service, and whose sister was of the same province, and very much attached to him. The countess was highly delighted in thus being able to cement a connexion with the king of Navarre, which she uniformly

maintained until his accession to the crown of France."

In the journal of Henry the Third, page 270, it is stated that the countess of Guiche forwarded levies to Henry the Fourth, which had been raised at her own expense; that she mortgaged her estates and sold her jewels, and that the fruit of this intrigue was a son named Anthony, whom Henry offered to recognize, but that the young man replied, he rather preferred the rank of a simple gentleman than to bear the acknowledged title of a king's bastard.

This expedition to the Low Countries so much irritated the king of Spain, that he was led to court an alliance with Henry of Navarre, to whom he offered succours, for the purpose of recommencing hostilities against the French royalists. Henry possessed too much uprightness of character to accede to these proposals, and in consequence despatched Rosny to make the king and queen mother acquainted with the offers so tendered. In delivering his instructions to Rosny for this mission, he spoke to him in general terms of the duties of princes and statesmen, and concluded his conversation with the following remarkable words: "*Remember, my friend, that the predominant characteristic of great courage, and a man of integrity, is to be inviolable in keeping his promise; you will never find me fail in any that I may be led to make.*"

Rosny set out for Paris; when this conduct

and upright proceeding, which so completely manifested the purity of the intentions of Henry of Navarre, only tended, on the contrary, to make Catherine of Medicis renew the bond of amity with Spain. What she most dreaded was the king of Navarre; even his virtues proved to her a source of fear and suspicion, on account of the ascendency thereby obtained over all hearts by his reputation for good faith, loyalty, and the most scrupulous adherence to all his engagements. In short, she detested in that prince a character that formed a complete contrast with her own, and which excited universal admiration.

All the memoirs of that period state, as we have before remarked, that the astrologers, constantly consulted by the queen mother, had predicted Henry would ascend the throne of France. Sully allows that she had the weakness to believe in the occult sciences, and that the soothsayers predicted to himself the same thing in regard to Henry the Fourth. That writer equally says, that one day conversing with the king of Navarre upon this subject, the monarch's reply was, "*That he believed religion should always inspire us with contempt for those wicked prognostications;* and that as regarded himself, he only placed confidence in one prognostic, which might be acquired, for the future conduct of men, from the study and knowledge of the human character." —*Sully*, vol. i. p. 146.

As the peace was not broken until the follow-

ing year, the accounts of that now under consideration afford little insight respecting the proceedings of the king of Navarre.

Le Grain records a curious adventure said to have happened with one captain Michau, who, it is stated, (but without positive proofs,) had feigned to quit the service of Spain for that of Henry of Navarre, in order to find an opportunity of putting a period to his existence by treason. "One day," says the narrator, "hunting in the forest of Ailles, captain Michau, well mounted, was close in the rear of the prince, having in his holsters two pistols ready cocked and loaded. The king, unarmed and quite alone, seeing him approach, exclaimed in bold and fearless accents, '*Captain Michau, alight, I am anxious to try the swiftness of your steed, and ascertain whether it is equal to what you assert.*' The captain obeyed; when the king, mounting his horse, drew the pistols from their holsters, saying, 'Are you desirous, then, of murdering any one? for, according to what I am told, your wish is to take my life, whereas I could now assassinate you myself were I desirous so to do:' having uttered these words, he fired off the two pistols in the air, commanding the captain to follow him." Michau having excused himself to the best of his power, two days after craved leave of absence, and never again appeared at court.—*Decade de Henri le Grand, book* 8.

During this year (1584) the duke of Alençon died, as it was supposed, from scenting a poisoned nosegay; but it appears certain, that his

demise originated in chagrin, overwhelmed as he was by shame and useless repentance in consequence of the result of his miserable expedition to the Low Countries. Anquetil, treating of the death of this prince, states; "Some assert that he died of melancholy, and others, from the effect of poison administered by order of the Spanish court, being still an object of apprehension, notwithstanding the discredit into which he had fallen." Perefixe, speaking on the same subject, says, "It is merely requisite for us to state, that in the year 1584, Monsieur died at Château Thierry, without having been married; that Henry the Third had also no children; it being too well known he was incapable of having any in consequence of an incurable malady contracted at Venice on his return from Poland. On this account, as soon as Monsieur was pronounced incurable, by the physicians, the Guises and the queen mother began to plot on either side, to ensure to themselves the crown, as if no heir had existed to claim the succession; since both parties held the king of Navarre of no account, inasmuch as he was removed a seventh degree from consanguinity, beyond which, in ordinary cases of succession, no claim of parentage is admitted; added to this, he did not profess the religion which the kings of France had uniformly followed from the time of Clovis, and consequently was deemed incapable of inheriting the crown, and assuming the title of his *most Christian majesty*. In addition to this, Henry was

two hundred leagues distant from Paris, and, as it were, exiled to a corner of Guienne, where his opponents imagined it would be easy to surround and annihilate him."

In reference to the character of the duke of Alençon, Anquetil says: The prince was lively, passionate, and turbulent; but full of candour, generosity, and good faith. The misfortunes of that period, at times, compelled him to conceal his thoughts; but he could never have sustained an enterprise which would have required any refinement of dissimulation. He was fond of glory, a passion that frequently prompted him to forget his duty, of which he repented on his death-bed, and claimed forgiveness of the king his brother. Madame Genlis says, that the duke of Anjou was without genius or talents, but possessed great ambition; he was deficient in nobility of soul, yet conceived the most elevated projects; he undertook hazardous enterprises, although divested of all the qualities necessary to ensure their success; there was no proportion between his desires, his designs, and his faculties; this is the height of misfortune for all men, but particularly when it proves the characteristic of princes. Notwithstanding this, however, some praise was due to that prince, since we find the authors of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew deemed it necessary to conceal the intended plot from the duke, who was wholly excluded from that terrific council.

The duke of Anjou is no less deserving pane-

gyric, owing to his uniform friendship for his sister, the queen of Navarre. He always courageously advocated her cause during the persecutions she experienced from Henry the Third. In the Memoirs of that princess, she particularly narrates the following circumstance. The duke of Alençon, who was suspected by the weak and mistrustful Henry the Third, was arrested at court, and guards were appointed over him, with orders not to permit the prince to quit his apartment. In the first instance, the duke enquired whether his sister Margaret was also placed under arrest; upon which, being answered in the negative, he remarked: "It greatly mitigates my pain to hear that she is at liberty; but although thus free, I am sure her affection towards me is such, that she would prefer remaining a captive to the enjoyment of liberty without me." The prince then requested M. de Cosse, who had arrested him, to obtain the king's permission, that Margaret might share his imprisonment, which demand was complied with. Margaret, in stating this anecdote, adds: "This firm belief, which he entertained of my unalterable and unshaken friendship, was for me a binding obligation; and more particularly so, as in consequence of his good offices towards me, he had acquired many great claims upon me, so that I always ranked that of sharing his misfortunes among the first." Margaret shut herself up with the duke, the king only permitting them to exercise themselves through the

chambers of the palace. The princess, however, subsequently permitted the duke to escape through the window of her chamber, by which action she exposed herself to all the vengeance of her royal brother.

The death of the duke of Anjou, says Perefixe, prompted the queen mother to form a plan for raising the children of her daughter, married to the duke of Lorraine, to the throne; and she, in consequence, was desirous that they should be regarded as princes of the blood royal. To this Catherine was not only prompted from the love she bore them, but the secret animosity she cherished towards the king of Navarre, seeing, that in spite of her ardent wishes, Heaven itself paved the way for his accession to the crown.

She was, however, egregiously deceived, considering the talents she possessed, to imagine that the duke of Guise would favour her designs. There is every reason to believe, and the sequel sufficiently testified the fact, that as he found himself urged on by favourites, and ill-treated by the king on account of the love he testified towards them, he formed the secret plan of securing to himself the possession of the throne. Such neglectful conduct, on the part of princes, is always calculated to infuse despair into minds so noble and elevated as was that of the duke of Guise. But being fully sensible he could never of himself attain to such an elevated station, particularly as it would be difficult to warp that affection which the French people naturally enter-

tained towards the princes of the blood royal, he conceived the plan of gaining over to his interest the old cardinal de Bourbon, uncle of the king of Navarre. Having formed this determination, he promised, that upon the death of Henry the Third, he would employ his forces and those of his friends to elect him king; when this old ecclesiastic, borne down by age, and suffering himself to be deceived by these vain hopes, became the dupe of the prince's ambition, who by this means drew over to his interests a great number of catholics favourable to the house of Bourbon.

The question therefore was, whether the uncle ought to precede the son of his elder brother in the succession, and if the representative in a collateral branch ought to take place or not. This point of right was then variously construed by the jurisconsults,—and many treatises were, in consequence, produced; some in favour of the uncle, and others advocating the cause of the nephew: these, however, were merely pen-combats; it was requisite that the sword should terminate such differences. Several great politicians conceived that the duke of Guise committed a flagrant error against his interests and the plans he proposed, in acknowledging cardinal de Bourbon as rightful successor to the crown; since, by that conduct, he admitted that after his death, which could not be far distant, it would devolve to his nephew the king of Navarre; but he, no doubt, calculated on effecting

the overthrow of the latter before that event should take place.

Henry the Third was sufficiently acquainted with the intentions of the duke, or was made aware of the same through the means of his favourites, who saw their certain downfal in case the plans of the prince should succeed. On this account, the king felt anxious to re-unite Henry of Navarre to the catholic church, in order to deprive the leaguers of the specious pretext they set forward in order to support the Holy League. In consequence of this, Henry the Third despatched the duke d'Epernon, who endeavoured to convert the king of Navarre, from principles of interest and policy. The monarch listened to his arguments with great composure; and then declared that the motives he adduced were not sufficient to effect the change desired; and he dismissed the duke with every mark of the highest consideration.

The Huguenots were vain enough to cause the conference of Henry with Epernon to be printed, for the purpose of proving that he was not to be shaken in his faith; and, in all probability, to confirm him in his tenets. On the other hand, the duke of Guise did not fail to profit by this event, which enabled him to place before the catholics the obstinate conduct of the prince, as he deemed it; and what was to be hoped for them in case he ascended the throne, harbouring such pernicious opinions.

In order, therefore, to close up every avenue,

the prince required that the zealots should openly renew the treaty of the Holy League, which was boldly disseminated throughout Paris, when numerous votaries of religion inspired new ardour in the souls of the confederates through the medium of the confessional. The first public assembly, before adverted to, was held at the College de Fortet, denominated *The Cradle of the League.*

Henry the Third, being fully aware that the leaguers unfurled the banner of revolt, at length awoke from his profound lethargy, and despatched the duke de Joyeuse, one of his favourites, into Normandy, in order to oppose the duke d'Elbeuf, who commanded the army in that province for the League. Rosny welcomed Joyeuse to his castle, and engaged to follow him; for enlisting to oppose the leaguers was advocating the real interests of the king of Navarre, upon whom the court also calculated, with good reason, under existing circumstances; fully assured, that he would coalesce with the royal forces to destroy the League, which was avowedly the enemy of both. Rosny set forward; but scarcely had he commenced his journey, when Joyeuse received despatches from the court containing news that the king had signed a treaty of peace with the League, accompanied also by an order that he would march that very army he headed against the king of Navarre, which had been originally designed to unite with him for the purpose of opposing the leaguers.

This disgraceful peace, entered into by the

king with his rebellious subjects, wielding arms in their hands, was denominated *The Treaty of Nemours*. The factious were, however, satisfied that Henry the Third should acknowledge cardinal de Bourbon not *as first prince of the blood, but the nearest allied,* which he really was in quality of uncle of the king of Navarre. From this it is obvious nothing was formally stipulated against the right of succession, an apparent advantage at least which the nephew obtained over his uncle.

Rosny, indignant and confounded on witnessing so much weakness and impropriety of conduct, hastily returned to his castle; where he sold timber off his estates to the amount of forty-eight thousand francs, (two thousand pounds sterling,) in order to carry the money to Henry of Navarre, who at that critical juncture stood in the greatest need of all the resources that friendship and fidelity could afford him.

The king of Navarre was fully aware of all the difficulties and dangers that awaited him, in consequence of the treaty of Nemours; and was very sensibly affected when made acquainted with its stipulations. "*Henry the Fourth,*" says Mathieu the historian, "*conversing one day with the marquis de la Force and myself on the subject of the regrets he experienced owing to that peace, stated, after deep meditation, and supporting his head upon his hand, that the evils he foresaw threatening his party were of such a nature as to turn one half of his mustachios white.*"

It is by no means surprising that Henry of Navarre should feel apprehensive in consequence of this peace; for, being the most potent adversary of the League, and abandoned by the prince of Condé and a large portion of his officers, that moment was deemed favourable by the leaguers to effect his complete overthrow. The duke of Guise, therefore, abandoning for a time his views upon the throne, thought it expedient to unite with Henry the Third, in order to exterminate the king of Navarre. Such were, in fact, the reasons that had prompted the factions to accede to pacific measures with the monarch, who, feeling that a short interval of repose would prove the result, was contented to ratify the terms; thus forfeiting his dignity and those real interests in future which ought to have biassed his conduct. Even prior to the demise of the duke d'Alençon, the duke of Guise being aware that the prince was attacked by an incurable malady, had taken all the precautions he deemed necessary to exclude the king of Navarre, by causing the nomination of cardinal de Bourbon, as before mentioned.

While these various intrigues were carried on, the king of Navarre employed all his activity and courage to seek out and prepare means to overthrow the machinations of his enemies. He proceeded to Montauban, where frequent conferences were held by the protestants on the resolutions necessary to adopt under the actual posture of affairs; but some of the chiefs were more

occupied with the thoughts of personal aggrandizement than the interests of the king; in short, every one formed to himself a plan for establishing his fortune, unconnected with the general measures laid down. In a secret conference which took place at Saint Paul de Lamiate, in the diocese of Castres, this disunion of sentiment and the ambitious views of individuals became more openly manifest. A secret audience was granted to a minister named Butriex, sent by the elector palatine, upon which occasion viscount Turenne gave the first proofs of the ambition and ingratitude which formed the basis of his character. He had, in unison with Butriex, formed a new system of government, in which he was joined by several other leaders; his desire was to make the Calvinist interest of France a republic under the protection of the elector palatine, who would appoint in his name five or six lieutenants in the provinces. By this plan the king of Navarre naturally became confounded together with all the princes of the blood, and officers of the religious reformers. Henry would thus have been reduced to a mere lieutenant of a foreign prince, or, more properly speaking, it was proposed to abandon and expel him, for the exalted sentiments of that prince were too well known to conceive that he would tacitly submit to such humiliating degradation. Such was the manner in which this good and great prince was generally served and seconded even at the most critical periods of his life. Active, vigilant, abounding with penetration and sagacity, he was aware of all these clandestine pro-

ceedings, which did not intimidate him; he had the prudence never to utter useless reproaches, and to appear ignorant of those ills which it was out of his power to controul; by this mode of action he feigned without duplicity, and by dissembling pardoned. We must not, however, omit to mention that he still possessed sterling friends, among whom Rosny obtained the first place in his heart, and posterity has very justly preserved to that faithful adherent the glorious title of first friend of Henry the Great of France.

Perefixe, adverting to this eventful period of Henry's life, states that all his virtue, energy, and courage, was required to oppose the shocks that awaited him. He was, it may be said, slumbering in the arms of voluptuousness, from whence these violent assaults awakened him; he then collected all his senses, recalled the inherent virtues of his mind, and began to make them appear with a vigour never before displayed. And it is no less true that he subsequently confessed the vast obligation he owed his enemies for having thus excited him to action; since, had he been permitted to remain quiet, the influence of sloth and repose might have consigned him to some corner of Guienne, where he would never have been prompted to think of his affairs; so that when Henry the Third met his death the prince would have been totally incapacitated from making any efforts for the possession of the throne.

Notwithstanding the cabals of the disaffected, the opinions of the friends of Henry of Navarre uniformly prevailed in the general assemblies of

the Calvinists. Henry marshal de Damville, then duke de Montmorency, during the last conference strongly insisted, equally with Rosny, on the necessity, in consequence of the actual danger, that the whole body of reformers should continue strongly united; and the latter particularly insisted on the recognition of a single leader, in order that their power should not be weakened by disuniting it. On quitting this council, the king of Navarre, taking Rosny aside, thus addressed him: "*Rosny, all does not consist in speaking well, but in acting better. Are you not resolved that we shall die together? It is no longer time to think of sparing the means; it is requisite that all honourable men should employ one-half of their possessions in order to secure the other; I feel convinced that you will be among the first to render me assistance, and I therefore promise that if ever good fortune awaits me, you shall participate in its benefits.*"—"*No, no, sire,*" replied Rosny, "*I do not desire that we should die, but live together; and that we may break the heads of our enemies. My housewifery shall not prove prejudicial to such a result; I still possess timber to the amount of an hundred thousand francs, the whole of which shall be employed for that purpose. You will at some future day give me more when you are rich.*"—"*Well, then, my good friend,*" said the monarch, locking Rosny in his firm embrace, "*go back to your estates, be diligent, and rejoin me the soonest possible, with as many friends as you can collect, and do not forget the timbers of the largest growth.*"

Rosny quitted the court, disposed of the last

tree he had upon his estates, deposited the money in a chest, and, escorted by a few faithful domestics, left his castle immediately, in order to rejoin the king of Navarre. The country and the roads were infested by soldiers of the different factions, and it was not until after he had surmounted an infinity of difficulties that Rosny was enabled to meet his master, at whose feet he deposited the produce of *his timbers of the largest growth*.

The grand contest, which was on the point of taking place, was the ninth civil war that had ravaged France, and was called *The Three Henries*, owing to the christian names of its leaders,—Henry the Third of France, Henry of Navarre, and Henry duke of Guise.

Several letters were written by the king of Navarre, addressed to the different orders of the realm; which compositions were truly worthy their royal author, from the style and sentiments they professed. In these letters, he laid before the clergy, who had been seduced by the artifices of the family of Lorraine, that the zeal and wealth of the catholics were only appropriated to the aggrandisement of that house. "*I do not fear*," said he, "*and God knows my heart, the evils that may accrue to me from your riches or your armies; but I shudder at the fate of a million of innocents who must be sacrificed in this civil commotion.*" He exhorted the people to peace, manifesting that upon themselves must ultimately fall the weight of taxation: and he endeavoured to excite in the breasts of the nobility that patriotism wherewith he felt penetrated. "*The French princes*,"

said he, "*are chiefs of the nobility; I love you all, I feel myself weakened and perishing in the effusion of your blood: a stranger cannot be imbued with similar sentiments.*"

To the disgrace of common sense, the most eloquent and energetic compositions, have never yet been capable of preventing a war which was the result of ambition; however, they tend to consecrate grand principles, and these letters equally conduced to redouble the admiration of the public for a youthful prince, who, amidst so many errors and follies, disseminated language so noble and so truly affecting. The king of Navarre at the same time published an open defiance to the duke of Guise, wherein he stated, among other things, "*That to spare the effusion of blood, to prevent the desolation of the poor, and the numerous disorders necessarily attendant upon war, he offered the duke of Guise, chief of the League, to terminate that quarrel, either individually, two to two, ten to ten, or such a number as he should decide, with weapons used between honourable cavaliers, either in the kingdom, or in such place as his majesty should order, or the duke of Guise select.*" This declaration produced a great sensation at a period when a martial spirit was the prevailing sentiment of all. The nobility very justly extolled this chivalric proceeding on the part of Henry of Navarre, because it was in every respect consonant with the character and conduct of that prince. Every one stated, that the duke ought not to refuse so great an honour; but the latter, unwilling to commit his cause to a personal quarrel, wisely

returned for answer, that he revered the princes of the royal blood; that he individually esteemed the king of Navarre; that he had no dispute to terminate with him, being solely interested for the preservation of the catholic religion, which was in danger, as the tranquillity of the state absolutely depended on a unity of religious sentiment. As the duke's courage was by no means problematical, the moderation of this reply, which gratified all parties, was universally extolled. The king of Navarre was speedily after called upon to display another act of vigour. Pope Sixtus the Fifth, successor of Gregory the Thirteenth, having been secretly applied to by the League, issued his bull against Henry of Navarre, fulminating the thunders of excommunication, and declaring the prince incapable of reigning. Henry immediately despatched emissaries to the king, laying before him his just complaints; whereby he proved, that in acting thus the pope equally opposed the rights of his majesty; that he ought to consider if the papal See attributed to itself temporal power by thus declaring a prince of the blood royal incapable of reigning, he might at some future period dispossess him also of the crown. In addition to this, Henry and the prince of Condé appealed from the sentence of the holy pontiff to the French chamber of peers, giving the direct lie to whosoever should accuse them of heresy, offering to prove the same in a general council; and moreover, protesting that they would avenge upon him, and all his accusers the injury done to the king, the royal family,

and all the courts of parliament. These remonstrances were productive of beneficial effect, for Henry the Third in consequence prohibited the publication of the bull in his dominions. The king of Navarre, however, was not satisfied with this preliminary success; he had friends at the court of Rome; some of whom were sufficiently bold to placard the king's protestations, and those of the prince of Condé, in all the public places of the city, and even against the walls of the Vatican. These writings, couched in the most energetic terms, made Sixtus the Fifth admire the courage of the monarch so persecuted by adverse fortune, and who, at so great a distance, knew how to vindicate his rights and avenge the injury done to his name. The pope even imbibed so much esteem for the prince, that he would never supply the League with money to carry on the war; a circumstance that caused the failure of several enterprises of moment against the Huguenots. It is impossible to express the embarrassed situation of Henry of Navarre at this period; without troops, money, or succours, he beheld three powerful armies marching against him: those of the dukes of Mayenne and Joyeuse, advanced with the utmost celerity, while that of marshal Matignon was in view of his own forces.

Henry proceeded in the direction of Castillon and Monsegur; he then fell upon Castel, and raised the siege of that town; but when he suddenly ascertained that the army of the duke of

Mayenne was near at hand, no one could conceive the possibility of resisting the combined efforts of two armies so superior in force; and a sentiment of terror became the predominating feeling throughout the ranks. The king of Navarre, alone, as calm in the hour of adverse fortune as generous when crowned by prosperity, still cherished a hope, and by his demeanour, conversation, and tranquillity, re-animated the drooping courage of his adherents. He decided on marching for Rochelle, and that he would reserve to himself the care of defending that place and its environs until the arrival of the expected foreign reinforcements.

It is necessary here to remark, that Henry never invited a foreign army to France (with the exception of the English, at a moment of the greatest exigency); neither did he maintain any connexion with the enemies of his country; nay, he even during this unfortunate struggle, uniformly rejected all their propositions. It is undeniable, that he carried on a considerable correspondence with queen Elizabeth; but she was the enemy of Spain, and by no means adverse to France. This common interest necessarily engaged Henry to take advantage of the succours forwarded to him by that princess, and the English uniformly conducted themselves with so much loyalty and courage, that Henry had no cause to repent their intervention; in short, the English forces did not commit an excess during their continuance in France. The foreign sup-

plies to which we now allude were led by the prince of Condé; they were to enter the French territory, not in support of the king of Navarre, with whom he was at variance, as before stated, but to advocate the cause of one half of the Calvinist party, of which Henry was neither the chief nor the commander; which was even opposed to his interests, and only formed a junction with him when perilous circumstances intervened to affect all alike.

In marching to the city of Rochelle, Henry of Navarre was subjected to the greatest dangers, from which he only extricated himself, as it were, by a kind of miracle; or, more properly speaking, he was indebted for his salvation to personal intrepidity and a presence of mind which never abandoned him. In vain did his numerous opponents environ him on all sides, and block up every avenue to prevent his escape; he evaded these impediments, accompanied by twenty officers and as many horse guards, notwithstanding his pursuers, who redoubled their efforts: sometimes having recourse to wise combinations, and always adopting the most astonishing activity. By this means the prince fortunately gained Rochelle, where he was received with transports of joy amounting to enthusiasm, in consequence of the unprecedented perils to which he had been exposed. All the money and ammunition of which he stood in need were immediately supplied: soon after which, Henry the Third despatched several useless deputations to the

king of Navarre, and among others Sillery and Lenoncourt, for the purpose of prevailing upon him to embrace the catholic faith, to abandon the Calvinists, and rejoin the court. To all these applications Henry of Navarre replied, that he could not change his tenets without being thoroughly convinced of the futility of his own persuasion; that he would never abandon brave and well-meaning men, who stood more than ever in need of his assistance; that they were all ready, himself at their head, to unite round the throne, if his majesty was willing to discard his real enemies, the duke of Guise and his creatures; that they would combat those rebels who were armed against the royal authority, and that they themselves only took up arms for the purpose of resisting aggression. If Henry the Third had followed these counsels, dictated by the most loyal prince, he would have reconquered all his rights, and France from that period would have been saved.

Notwithstanding the superiority of the forces of the League, says Sully, the campaign of this year was less advantageous to that faction than to the king of Navarre. Henry caused nearly all the enterprises of the catholics to fail, and surprised numerous places in Poitou, Saintonge, and Guienne, added to which the misunderstanding that arose between the duke de Mayenne and marshal de Matignon, was highly favourable to the king of Navarre. He ordered the duke de la Trimouille to take possession of Talmont

with twelve hundred infantry, two hundred horse, and three cannons, furnished him by the Rochellers. This force, however, not proving sufficient, Henry quickly levied two thousand men in the environs of Rochelle, with whom he embarked on board three vessels, which conducted them to Talmont. The passage should not have exceeded six hours: but a violent tempest kept them at sea for two days, during which period they were in imminent danger of perishing, but at length arrived at Talmont; when the besieged, aware that the king of Navarre would conduct the attacks in person, surrendered the place immediately. Henry, with equal good luck, took possession of Lunjay and Saint Maixant; and, on receiving a reinforcement of two hundred horse and fifteen hundred infantry, furnished by the prince of Condé and Francis de la Rochefoucauld, prince of Marsillac, son of the nobleman murdered at the Saint Bartholomew massacre, he undertook the siege of Fontenay, the second city of Poitou, although he was fully aware that a brave general was governor of the place, which was defended by a strong garrison.

Roussiere, the governor, was not only anxious to defend the town, but the suburbs of Loges, more extensive and richer than the city itself, and defended without by a ditch, with strong barricadoes, that closed up the entrance to the suburb. The king of Navarre ordered the attack during a very dark night, under the direction of Rochefoucauld at the head of forty gen-

tlemen and ten or twelve volunteers, amongst whom was Rosny. The assailants were three times driven back; but the suburb was at length taken; where the king of Navarre lodged with all his retinue; they were, however, much incommoded by the discharges of musquetry from the place, which, from the terrace over the great gate, commanded the whole range of the street, rendering the entrance to the king's mansion and the adjoining dwellings very dangerous. Independent of this, the batteries of the ramparts commanded the avenues of this suburb; so that nothing could enter without experiencing incessant discharges of artillery. One day, as Rosny was crossing the street to attend the king, a ball struck his helmet, which his *valet de chambre* at that moment presented him: in consequence of this he caused a rope to be stretched across the street, over which linen was thrown, and by this means he prevented the besieged from discerning those who traversed the route. Henry now applied himself industriously in forming the trenches, and undermining, superintending in person all the labours of the miners, after adopting every necessary precaution in regard to succours that might arrive from without. During this siege, Rosny's principal employment was conducting the artillery; when the mine was at length pushed so near the surface that the workmen were enabled to hear the voices of the soldiery who guarded the parapets; the king himself having first become aware of that circumstance. He then

spoke, and made himself known to the besieged, who, thinking in the first instance, that they only heard the voice of one of the common miners, were so astonished when the king proclaimed himself from the subterraneous passage, that they desired to capitulate. All the necessary arrangements were conducted in this singular manner; the articles being drawn out, or rather dictated by the king of Navarre. The confidence in Henry's word was so universally predominant, that the besieged would not hear of any writings being signed; and Henry, gratified with the nobleness of this proceeding, yielded to the inhabitants much more than he had promised, for not only was the city preserved from pillage and all insult, but he accorded the honours of war to the garrison. Henry after this took possession of several other places in Lower Poitou, when the residue of the year was spent without further proceedings of import; while the catholic forces receiving neither succours nor money from the court, proved alike inactive; and the duke de Mayenne, in consequence, found himself compelled to retire. The duke, owing to this neglect, complained bitterly that the court had abandoned him; which greatly augmented the murmurs raised against Henry the Third, who, in reality, fearing the leaguers much more than the Huguenots, felt no wish whatsoever to exterminate the latter. At the conclusion of the year, negotiations were entered into, which merely terminated in a temporary cessation of hosti-

lities, the result of uncertainty and fatigue, war giving place to festivals and balls, which were carried on in the respective courts; for, according to the brave Blaise de Montluc, marshal of France, in his Memoirs, "*let whatsoever would take place, it was always requisite the ball should be attended to.*" During one of the conferences which occurred with the queen mother, the king of Navarre had occasion to testify that good faith from which he was never known to deviate. A truce had been agreed upon for the surety of carrying on these negotiations, so that in case either party had broken it, all those might have been seized who had taken a part in any such infraction of the treaty, and the chiefs in particular. Some of the king of Navarre's people, unknown to the prince, conceived a plan which, attended by success, would have placed at his disposal Catherine of Medicis and the lords who attended her. These individuals, feigning to betray their party, held a conference with some catholic captains ardent for plunder, and promised to deliver up Fontenay, which they would in reality have suffered them to take. By this means the catholics must have been convicted of perfidy, and the king of Navarre would consequently have had a legal right to seize on the queen mother and all her court. But the generous prince, having acquired a knowledge of these underhand practices, gave vent to his indignation, and adopted the necessary precautions to prevent the execution of the plot.

During this period, however, the League, says Perefixe, made dreadful progress in public opinion at Paris. Enthusiasm for the duke of Guise, and contempt for the king, were carried to the highest pitch. The court contented itself in adopting finesse and dissimulation, being ignorant, that in great movements, the best arranged artifices can never prove but secondary means, and that one violent effervescence is never appeased but in possessing sufficient art and talent to excite another.

The League (or the *Sixteen*, as they were originally termed, not because the council only consisted of that number, but owing to sixteen being selected from thence to be distributed throughout the different quarters of Paris, in order to assume the predominance,) very frequently proceeded to greater extremities than the duke of Guise desired. His ambition had flattered and disseminated errors, which, in spite of himself, became truly monstrous; and it was in vain that he combated these excesses even in the bosom of his own family. Historians have not made us acquainted with the real motives of envenomed hatred that rankled in the mind of Catherine Mary of Lorraine, duchess of Montpensier, sister of the duke of Guise, and widow of the duke de Montpensier, towards Henry the Third; but this inveterate sentiment was carried even to ferocity. The vindictive princess was wholly occupied with the cruel care of inspiring the factious with her criminal energy, and all the black projects of her

dire vengeance. For this purpose she was present at all the conspiracies formed against the king's person and state; and in consequence of this atrocious malice, dishonouring equally her rank, character, and sex, she even astonished the Leaguers themselves by her horrid perseverance in seeking to persecute the unfortunate monarch, whom she followed with insatiate fury to the very confines of the grave. One Leaguer only among the *Sixteen* possessed the confidence of the duke of Guise, and that was Francis de Roucherolles, a bold and eloquent man, more moderate than any other, capable of inspiring enthusiasm, but who did not always possess the means of curbing the impetuosity which he had excited. It is on this account that, during the convulsions of a state, those who are the fomenters of troubles always prove more culpable than they had really intended. We may in our minds prescribe certain limits beyond which we do not intend to encroach; in such cases, however, it is very hazardous to rely upon our own force, but to place confidence in that of others is, indeed, presumptuous in the extreme! For it is absolutely impossible to prescribe the point where those will stop who are hurried along an obscure and slippery path which is without the pale of real duty.

Henry of Navarre, says Perefixe, finding that the chiefs of the League used every effort to bring over to their interest the nobles and cities of the realm, did all in his power to unite his

adherents of both religions, among whom the following were most conspicuous: Marshal de Damville, Montmorency, governor of Languedoc; the duke de Montpensier, prince of the blood, and governor of Poitou, together with his son the prince de Dombes; the prince of Condé, possessing part of Poitou; Saintonge, and l'Angoumois; with the count de Soissons, and the prince de Conti, his brother. Of these nobles, who were of the blood royal, the three latter were Henry's cousins german, the two former standing in a more distant degree of consanguinity, the whole professing the catholic religion, with the exception of the prince of Condé. Besides these the king had also on his side Lesdiguières, who, from the rank of a private gentleman, had raised himself by his courage to be the master of Dauphiny, making the duke of Savoy tremble; Claude de la Trimouille duke de Thouras, a young nobleman of illustrious birth, full of fire and spirit, and very powerful in Poitou and Brittany, recently a convert to the reformed religion, whose sister Charlotte had married the prince of Condé; Henry viscount de Turenne, who had also embraced Calvinism; Chatillon, son of admiral Coligny; La Boulaye, lord of Poitou; René, chief of the house of Rohan; Francis, count de la Rochefoucauld; George de Clermont d'Amboise; the lord d'Aubeterre; Jacques de Caumont La Force; the lord de Pons; Saint Gelais Lausac; with many other nobles and gentlemen of note, for the most part of

the reformed persuasion. At the same period Henry of Navarre also despatched able negotiators to the courts of Elizabeth of England and the protestant German princes, obliging them to league together for the support of each other. The whole being in consequence united, the very reverse of what had been calculated by the League took place; for the king of Navarre consequently found himself so fortified that he entertained no apprehension of being overpowered by his enemies, without the means of opposing a strong resistance.

Conspiracies at this period multiplied; Philip of Spain was preparing his *Invincible* fleet against England, which perished in the waves, and, as if he had foreseen this misfortune, says Anquetil, he was desirous of having upon the French coast a port whither he might, in case of accident, bring his vessels to anchor. The Leaguers not only seconded his views in seeking to gain possession of Boulogne for that purpose, but they took charge of its execution by means of their emissaries. The king being made acquainted with this plot, easily caused its failure, but without punishing the guilty. This ill-timed clemency emboldened conspirators to aim at his own person; and in consequence the factious laid a plan to stop the king upon his return from the castle of Vincennes with few attendants, according to his ordinary custom; upon another occasion, they sought to carry him off amidst the tumult of the fair of Saint Germain, whither he

sometimes repaired very ill attended; but there yet remained subjects faithful to their king, and, among others, Nicholas Poulain, lieutenant of the provost of Paris, who gave his majesty timely notice of all these projected attempts. This individual was sufficiently adroit to acquire the confidence of the conspirators to such a point, that he obtained from them a commission to purchase arms and conceal them. In order to make the king acquainted with another conspiracy, much more complicated, Poulain had recourse to a very singular stratagem. He could not, without being suspected by the conspirators, have any long interview with the chancellor, and therefore desired that he might be arrested and conveyed to prison, as suspected of evil designs; after which the chancellor caused him to be led to his presence under the pretext of subjecting him to interrogatories, when, instead of adopting such a step, Poulain explained to the chancellor the whole intrigue, which was to the following effect. The conspirators were first to take possession of the Bastille, the Arsenal, the Temple, and the great and little Chatelet; when it was intended to murder the chancellor, the first president, and advocate; after which the Louvre was to be invested; chains were to be stretched across all the streets; the king was to be seized and consigned to prison; a parliament convoked, in order to pronounce judgment, and a council elected to govern the state. The disclosure of Poulain caused the failure of all these projects; and

although not planned by the Guises themselves, they were well aware of the measures, which they did not prevent, but would have turned the same to their own account had they proved successful, and even countenanced the treason in secret. The king, by having timely notice, assembled troops, took possession of the gates, and secured the several posts that were menaced; when, finding the plot discovered, all the conspirators were completely confounded. If, during this period of consternation, the king had seized the chiefs of the Leaguers, (and, among others, the duke de Mayenne, who was then at Paris,) vigorous and prudent means might afterwards have been adopted to destroy that faction; but the patient weakness of the monarch completed the ruin of every thing. The duke de Mayenne retired, having the effrontery to present himself before the king, in order to take his leave; on which occasion the monarch was content to utter the few following words, in a sarcastic tone: "*What! my cousin, is it thus you abandon your good friends the Leaguers?*" To which the duke, disconcerted, made answer, "*I know not what your majesty alludes to.*" Henry, fully satisfied with thus expressing his sentiments, permitted the duke to retire, who left Paris without any impediment, after having promised the rebels that he would never abandon them, and that on the first alarm his brother and himself would fly to their assistance. As an assurance for the performance of this promise, he left with them

several experienced officers, who only remained however to animate the disaffected, and support them in the disposition which then spurred them on in their rebellious proceedings.

Sully and Perefixe remark, that the conduct of Henry the Third on this occasion, and his excessive indulgence, sufficiently demonstrate that it was requisite to proceed to the last extremities to urge his adoption of violent measures, and that even then he had not formed any sinister projects against the ambitious and restless family of Guise. Mere enterprises that had failed in their execution were not sufficient motives to create his anger; nothing short of actual and pressing danger could excite him to action. The king, however, dreaded the duke of Guise, fully aware that every thing was to be apprehended from his daring ambition. He was, notwithstanding, persuaded, that all his projects would be overturned if the duke de Joyeuse, one of his favourites, could obtain any signal successes over the king of Navarre; as, in such case the duke, a faithful subject, eclipsing the reputation of Guise, and even that of the Calvinist princes, would assume a vast ascendancy over public opinion, and thus restore every thing to good order. Troops were marched to Joyeuse, and he was despatched to Guienne; but the king of Navarre, not having been able to collect sufficient forces to resist him, contented himself with throwing garrisons into those towns that were obedient to him, in order to impede the

progress of the enemy, and fatigue his army by obliging it to lay sieges. The first summer months were spent without any affair of moment having taken place on either side; and, during this time, a court intrigue and the fear of being supplanted in the royal favour, determined Joyeuse to quit the army on a sudden; which caprice of the favourite gave Henry of Navarre time to collect all his forces. Immediately after the departure of Joyeuse, the army, deprived of its leader, and previously ill disciplined, subsisted without regulation or command. The king of Navarre, having secretly collected twelve hundred men from his garrisons, luckily fell upon several companies so opportunely, that part were at table and the rest in bed, in consequence of which the troops were all cut in pieces. The prince also, upon several other occasions, gave the alarm to the whole army which had been left under the command of Lavardin; and he followed its march as far as La Haie, in Touraine, where he kept it, as it were, in a state of siege, for four or five days.

Jean de Beaumanoir, marquis de Lavardin, to whose direction the duke de Joyeuse had confided the royal army, was son of Charles de Beaumanoir, killed during the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, who upon the death of his father embraced the catholic persuasion. He bore arms at the age of eighteen, became a great captain, and in the sequel advocated the cause of Henry the Fourth, who, by way of recompense for the

services he performed, made him a knight of his orders in 1595, and subsequently a marshal of France. At the coronation of Louis the Thirteenth, Lavardin performed the functions of grand master of the royal household.

If Henry of Navarre had possessed sufficient forces to maintain his position longer, famine would have compelled the army to surrender. The soldiers spread themselves through the villages in every direction in search of food; and, in consequence, during those few days, nearly seven hundred men were taken or killed. Rosny, with only six horsemen, entered a village full of soldiers; but so accustomed were they to dread the troops of the king of Navarre, that they never thought of defending themselves, but immediately surrendered, to the number of forty; and, Rosny conducting them to his prince, they immediately enlisted among his troops. Henry was joined by the princes of Condé and Conti, the count de Soissons, the duke de la Trimouille, and viscount Turenne. The duke de Joyeuse, having acquired more favour than ever at court, soon returned to the army, accompanied by the flower of the French nobility. The king of Navarre, being far inferior in numbers, could only endeavour to force a passage, in order to join the auxiliary troops from Germany which had entered France: he had, indeed, no other design; but Joyeuse, who penetrated his views, conceived he ought not to procrastinate, but give the enemy battle,

though marshal Matignon was also advancing with his army.

Madame Genlis states, that Henry did not effect a junction with the German troops, who proved of no utility to the Calvinists, merely ravaging the country; after which they disbanded, and were ultimately exterminated.

This determination on the part of the duke de Joyeuse has been judged, by most historians, a foolish presumption; Sully, however, justifies the measure, and it is by no means impossible that the idea of not sharing with another the glory of vanquishing the king of Navarre may have instigated the duke de Joyeuse; but prudence and reason, however, did not oppose the proceeding. In fact, the duke with the troops under his command, was so superior in force to Henry, that he ought not to have risked the waiting Matignon's coming up, in order to give the king of Navarre an opportunity of escaping, and thus accomplishing a junction with the foreign power. Besides, he perceived from Henry's movements, that he was anxious to avoid a battle,—a further reason to propel his hostile movements. After these reflections, Joyeuse so closely pursued the march of the king, that he overtook him in the vicinity of Coutras, a very important post in Guienne, on the frontiers of Perigord, near the junction of the rivers Lille and Droume, of which Henry had taken possession in consequence of his great activity. He had the good fortune to plant his artillery on an eminence, while that of his adver-

sary was very ill placed; and this circumstance contributed greatly to his gaining the battle. "*Nothing is so essential to a general,*" says Sully, dwelling on this subject, "*as a first correct glance of the eye, which curtails the means and obviates confusion. I never knew any commander to possess this coup-d'œil in so eminent a degree as Henry the Fourth.*" The king of Navarre, finding it impossible to avoid a disadvantageous encounter, which, if unsuccessful, would leave him without resources, courageously abandoned himself to the direction of Providence; he remarked in his officers and soldiers so much ardour and good will, that he commanded them to march on the ensuing day and give battle to their enemy.

The army of Joyeuse was brilliant with youth, their arms glittered with gold ornaments; embroidered scarfs decorated their shoulders, while the troops of all the nobility were covered with cloaks of velvet; those of the king of Navarre, on the contrary, were divested of all ornaments; their arms were of unpolished iron, and their vestments only calculated to brave fatigue and the weather.

The former had under his command six thousand infantry, and two thousand five hundred cavalry, perfectly well mounted, while the latter consisted of four thousand five hundred infantry, and twelve hundred horse, very badly equipped. The royalist forces had to boast superiority of numbers, the name and authority of the monarch, and an assurance of the most brilliant rewards;

but it consisted in a great measure of inexperienced troops; it was deficient in order and discipline; the general who commanded was without reputation; his principal officers were young men, reared in the delights of a court, abounding in honour and courage, but devoid of all experience. The opposing army, on the contrary, consisted of the *élite* of the Calvinist party, and the old and honourable remnants of the battles of Jarnac and Montcontour, incessantly exercised by a hero who had illustrated their career by numerous magnanimous exploits; men nourished in the use of arms, hardened to fatigue, and accustomed to believe nothing impossible, when led on by an intrepid and honourable commander. It was headed by four princes of the blood, the first of whom, always ably seconded when it was necessary to fight, was idolized by the soldiers, revered as the presumptive heir to the throne, and the hope of all good Frenchmen; finally, it was aware of the absolute necessity of conquering or being annihilated; even its inferiority in this instance proved its greatest incitements to acts of glory.

When the two armies were in presence of each other, some one having pointed out to Henry the gaudy and pompous appearance of the enemy's battalions: "*Well,*" replied the king, "*we shall have the better means of singling them out when we fall to it hand to hand.*" He then began to harangue his troops, deploring in the most affecting language the dire effects of civil commotions,

which arm parents against one another, brothers against brothers, and friends against friends: he then most feelingly adverted to the fate of France; he called on Heaven to witness the ceaseless efforts he had made to come to an amicable adjustment of all difficulties, adding, that he did not carry arms against his monarch, whom he revered, but in defence of his religion and his rights. "*Perish,*" continued the king, with vehemence;—"*perish the authors of this war, and may their blood, now on the point of being shed, fall upon their own heads!*" Then, turning towards the princes of the blood, he pronounced as follows: "*In regard to yourselves, I have nothing to utter, unless it be to remind you, that ye inherit the blood of the Bourbons; and as the Lord lives! I will teach you all that I am senior of the race?*"—"*And we,*" answered the princes, "*will prove that we are also the younger ones!*" Henry then fell upon his knees, and the whole army followed his example; upon which a Calvinist minister pronounced a short but fervent prayer; and the king immediately ordered a plume of long white feathers to be attached to his helmet, *being partial to that colour;* and above all, that he might thus be visible to his whole army. Previous to setting forward, he turned to his men with a cheerful countenance, and exclaimed: "*My friends, yonder is the newly betrothed, whose dowry is still untouched in the coffers; it is now your business to go and seek it!*"

Anquetil states, vol. ii. p. 322, that the duke de Joyeuse, having observed Henry and his army

prostrated and at prayers, remarked to his first lieutenant Lavardin, "*The king of Navarre is afraid.*"—"*Do not believe that,*" replied the latter; "*he never prays without having formed the resolution to conquer or to die.*"

According to Brantome, Mathieu, Sully, and Le Grain, the encounter commenced on the 20th October, about nine in the morning, when the catholics, in the onset, had the advantage, as the troops of Turenne and La Trimouille were driven back at the first shock, which carried disorder through the rest of the army; upon this the catholics cried aloud, "*Victory;*" but the artillery, advantageously placed, and directed by Rosny, began such a terrible and destructive fire, that each discharge swept off twelve, fifteen, and sometimes twenty men. We learn from Le Grain, that the first fire killed seven captains of the regiment of Picardy, the best and most experienced officers of the army of Joyeuse; yet this artillery, so dreadful in its consequences, consisted only of three pieces of cannon. Such cruel havock stopped the impetuosity of the royal troops, and incommoded them to such a degree, that in order to seek shelter, they broke their ranks, thus presenting nothing but a disjointed corps to the tremendous efforts of the king of Navarre, the prince of Condé, and the count de Soissons, who had rushed forward at the head of three squadrons. These princes were valiantly supported by captain Schouppes, of whom we have previously made honourable mention, at

the affair of Cahors, Montgomery, Belzunce, and Charbonniere; the princes performed prodigies of valour, so that *their arms were literally indented with blows.* In the thickest of the fray, several officers placed themselves in front of the king of Navarre, with a view of covering and defending his person; to whom he cried, "*Quarter, quarter I entreat — do not stand in my light, I wish to be seen;*" in short, the bravery of Henry eclipsed that of every other combatant. He broke through the foremost ranks of the catholics; made several prisoners with his own hand; and, according to Perefixe, rushed up to a cavalier named Châteauregnard, exclaiming, "*Yield thyself up, thou Philistine.*" The unfortunate Joyeuse did not strive to escape: "*What must be done?*" demanded one of his lieutenants; "*Die,*" answered the duke; upon which, he rushed amidst the enemy's battalions, accompanied by Claude de Saint Sauveur, his brother, when both were killed.

De Bury, vol. i. p. 180, speaking of the melancholy catastrophe of Joyeuse, says, that the duke, perceiving. the battle irretrievably lost, retired alone towards his artillery, when he was encountered by two captains, named Saint Christophe and La Vignole, to whom he resigned his sword, promising them a ransom of an hundred thousand crowns; but three other officers, named Bordeaux, Des Centiers, and La Mothe Saint Heray, coming up at the moment, the latter discharged a pistol at the duke, and killed him dead upon the spot.

In the notes to the Henriade of Voltaire, that writer states that the duke de Joyeuse, when he was sent to Rome, charged by Henry the Third with a mission for the pope, was received as if he had been *brother to the king*. This, however, is by no means correct, as the reception was very cold, and he obtained nothing he was commissioned to ask.

The battle of Coutras lasted only two hours, and the victory was complete: five thousand of the catholics were left dead upon the field; their loss in prisoners amounting to upwards of five hundred; while very few men fell in the army of the king of Navarre. At the conclusion of the conflict, some one perceiving in the distance a corps of fugitives which made halt, mistook them for the enemy, and came to inform the king that the army of marshal Matignon was in sight: "*Come then, my friends,*" said Henry, "*this will be a novel sight, two battles fought in one day!*" After having thus manifested his intrepid courage, the king equally caused his bounty, modesty, and clemency, to be adored. He ordered the burial of the slain, and directed that the wounded should have every attention shewn them; he forwarded the bodies of Joyeuse and his brother to their family; announced to all the prisoners that he accorded them their liberty without ransom; while to several he restored their stands of colours and their baggage, as a recompense for their valour, and repressed the gaiety of some young officers of his army, by remarking, "*The*

present moment should be that of tears, even with the conquerors." A slight repast had been prepared for the king in a grand saloon, which in the hurry had been carpeted with standards captured from the enemy: his entrance proved a noble and imposing spectacle; his demeanour was calm and modest; in this apartment, so sumptuously decorated, he was followed by a crowd of prisoners, freed by his generosity, forgetting their defeat to yield themselves up to transports of admiration and gratitude, and who, mingling with his adherents, pressed around his person, unconscious all the time that they constituted a part of his triumph. On the field of battle they had every where and upon all occasions beheld in him an intrepid and formidable enemy; while they no longer contemplated the hero but as a deliverer, abounding with kindness and generosity.

Perefixe says, the bravery of Henry was not alone to be admired on this occasion, his justice being equally conspicuous, in proof of which he gives the following statement: "Henry had carried on an intrigue with the daughter of an officer of Rochelle, which had dishonoured the family, and very much scandalized the Rochellers. As the squadrons were on the point of charging, a Calvinist minister took the liberty of representing to the monarch that heaven would abandon his arms if he did not previously crave forgiveness for the offence, and repair the scandal as much as possible, by a public avowal of the injury he had committed against the family of the lady.

The king listened to these remonstrances with great humility, knelt down, craved forgiveness of God for his iniquity, requested all present to be witnesses of his contrition, and to assure the parent of the female, that in case he was suffered to survive, he would do all in his power to repair the crime of which he had been guilty. Such a Christian-like submission drew tears from the auditors; nor was there an individual present but would have forfeited a thousand lives for a prince who so cordially acquiesced in doing justice to his inferiors."

It has been alleged that Henry did not profit by this signal victory; that he ought, after the battle, to have marched without loss of time and formed a junction with the German confederates, in which case he would certainly have been master of France: Sully even uttered reproaches on this head, which so many generals have equally merited, and above all during civil wars. It appears that after great success there exists in every man a confidence in good fortune, and a necessity of applauding oneself with those one loves, which adds an invincible charm to mental and bodily quiet. Sully, however, agrees that it would have been extremely difficult for the king of Navarre to have kept assembled under his orders troops commanded by leaders actuated from motives of individual ambition; and Perefixe adds, that "*Henry was not desirous of urging matters forward too much; fearful of giving umbrage to the king, with whom he was still*

anxious to keep on terms, always hoping to become reconciled with him." The prince of Condé wished to dismember from the French crown, Anjou, Poitou, the territory of Aunis, Saintonge, and l'Angoumois, in order to form an independent principality; and count de Turenne (afterwards duke de Bouillon) entertained similar views in regard to Limousin, and Perigord, where he already possessed large estates. The count de Soissons more adroitly concealed his designs, because a great degree of perfidy formed the basis and hopes of his ambitious projects. He found means to gain the heart of Catherine, sister of the king of Navarre; he uniformly expressed to that prince the ardent desire he felt of becoming nearly allied to him; but from the bottom of his soul his real intention was by this union to cause himself to be substituted, and thereby assume all the rights of the king of Navarre. It was in this manner Henry was seconded by the princes of his blood and the first leaders of his army.

After this brilliant victory, Henry found himself more abandoned by his officers than if he had actually been conquered; because in that case, perhaps, the calls of honour or danger, at least, would have kept his warriors around him. The king of Navarre retired to Bearn, after having disposed of all his remaining forces by establishing them in winter quarters. Henry proved for some time adverse to the affections of his sister for the count de Soissons, but was at length on the point of giving his consent to the union,

when a letter chanced to fall into his hands, which enabled him to ascertain for a certainty the perfidious designs of the count. This document completely changed the king's ideas, who from that moment entertained towards the dissembling and ungrateful prince the most invincible disgust, and a determination to break off every connexion and personal intimacy.

CHAPTER IX.

Astrologers predicted 1588 *the marvellous year.—Death of the prince of Condé, and Henry the Fourth's letter on that event.—Character of the prince of Condé.—Opposite characteristics of Henry the Third and the duke of Guise.—Destruction of the German forces.—Assembly of the League at Nancy.—Their exorbitant petition to the king.—The duke of Guise commanded not to return to Paris.—His entrance into that city.—Interview of Guise with Henry the Third.—Proposals of the duke to the king.—The king summonses troops to Paris.—Day of the Barricadoes.—The duke of Guise fortifies himself in the city.—Interview of the duke with the queen mother, and his pretensions.—The king escapes from Paris.—Faults of the king and the duke.—Guise becomes master of the capital,—his interview with the first president de Harlay.—Henry the Third seeks refuge at Charles.—Procession of the Penitents to that city.—The king removes his court to Rouen.—The king of Navarre's disinterested offers to Henry the Third rejected.—The king ratifies the disgraceful treaty named The Edict of Union.—Meditated plans of the duke of Guise.—The king's determination to have Guise assassinated.—Opening of the States General at Blois.—Overbearing insolence of Guise.—Self-security of that nobleman, and precautions unattended to.—Crillon refuses to murder the duke of Guise, which Loignac undertakes to accomplish.—Assassination of the duke of Guise and his brother the cardinal.—Character of the duke of Guise.—Consternation of the Parisians, and their subsequent measures against the royal authority.—Death of Catherine de Medicis—her character and device.—Henry of Navarre's conduct on hearing of the assassination of the*

Guises.—Decree of the Sorbonne against Henry the Third.—General revolt instigated by the League.—Henry the Third forms an association with the king of Navarre to oppose the leaguers.—Interview of the monarchs.—Henry the Third narrowly escapes being madeprisoner.—Timely succour of the king of Navarre.—Insults disseminated by the League against the king.—Brave action of Rosny.—Noble conduct of Henry of Navarre.—Disinterested proceeding of the duke de Longueville.—Devotion of Sancy for the king.—Threats of the Holy See against Henry the Third.—Assassination of Henry the Third by James Clement, and feeling conduct of the king of Navarre on that melancholy occasion.—Character of Henry the Third.

THE commencement of the year 1588, says Perefixe, was, by all the judicial astrologers, denominated *the marvellous year*, as they had foreseen such a number of singular accidents, and so much confusion in natural causes, that they declared, in case the end of the world did not arrive, a universal change would at all events take place. This foreboding was seconded by a variety of dreadful prodigies that occurred throughout Europe. In France earthquakes were felt the whole length of the river Loire, as well as in Normandy; and the sea continued for the space of six weeks in such a tempestuous state as seemed to confound earth and heaven together. Numerous meteors were observed in the air; and on the 24th of January Paris was visited by such a dense fog, that nothing was perceptible at mid-day without the assistance of torches. All these prodigies, continues our author, seemed to imply what was

on the eve of taking place: the death of the prince of Condé, the barricado of Paris, the overthrow of the whole realm of France, the murder of the Guises, and, lastly, the assassination of Henry the Third.

During the residence of Henry of Navarre at Bearn, he received intelligence of the sudden death of Henry de Bourbon, prince of Condé, which event occurred on the 5th of March, 1588. Although, says Perefixe, there existed a secret jealousy between them, Henry, forgetting the just cause of discontent, of which he had cause to complain in regard to that prince, only felt upon this melancholy occasion as for the loss of one who was his relative, and abounded with talents and courage. On learning these sad tidings, Henry wept bitterly, crying aloud, *that he had lost his right arm:* to which he added, "*God is my refuge and my support; it is in him alone I place my hope, and I shall not be confounded.*" He also wrote upon this momentous subject to Corisande d'Audoin, countess of Grammont, a letter that will doubtless be read with interest, of which the following is a literal translation:

"One of the greatest misfortunes I had reason to apprehend has occurred to me, being the sudden death of Monsieur the Prince. I lament his loss for that which he would have been, and not for what he was..... This unfortunate prince, not from any natural cause; having on Thursday tilted at the ring, and supped in good health, was at midnight seized

with a vomiting, which continued until near morning; he remained in bed the whole of Friday; at night he supped; and having slept well, rose on the Saturday morning, dined standing upright, and then played at chess; he arose from his chair and walked backwards and forwards in his chamber, conversing with one and the other: on a sudden he exclaimed—'Bring me my chair, I feel a great weakness;' he was scarcely seated when he became speechless, and immediately after surrendered up his soul. The marks of poison instantly became manifest. It is impossible to conceive the astonishment this circumstance has created throughout that country; I shall set forward by the first break of day to make diligent research into the affair. I I foresee that much trouble will attend this business; pray God ardently for me; if I should escape the like, it may well be conceived that he has protected me, though I may, perchance, be nearer than I think. I shall remain your faithful slave. Good night, my soul; I kiss your hands a million times. March, 1588."

After this event, which took place at Saint Jean d'Angely, one of the pages of the prince of Condé absconded; and was afterwards executed in effigy. The prince left Charlotte Catherine de la Trimouille, his widow, three months pregnant; and this princess, whether true or false, was accused of having been guilty of the murder. René de Cumont, lieutenant of Saint Jean d'Angely, commenced proceedings against her,

which were afterwards suspended for six years. A servant, named Brillant, was torn to pieces by four horses; in the sequel, however, the judge was accused of precipitancy, notwithstanding which, he remained unpunished. After being detained captive for six years, the princess presented a petition to the parliament of Paris, which pronounced her innocent.

Anquetil, in his Spirit of the League, defines the character of the prince of Condé in the following manner:—He was to be admired for the strictest probity, indefatigable perseverance, and an intrepidity which was not always regulated by prudence. The events and perils of his life are well known. Obliged to fly from Noyers with his father, he beheld him perish at Jarnac. He fought at Montcontour, and with difficulty escaped the massacre of Saint Bartholomew. The prince of Condé more than once traversed the whole territory of France as a fugitive, and was left destitute upon the frontiers. He was captured twice, but his rank remained unknown; dismounted at the battle of Coutras by the blow from a lance, he was ultimately reserved for poison at the age of thirty-five, when in the bosom of his family. The duke of Guise, a uniform admirer of the virtues of this prince as a generous rival, shed tears on hearing of his demise; perhaps, as some historians have remarked, because the violent death of a man of such exalted rank led him to melancholy reflections as to what might prove his own destiny.

The death of the prince of Condé was, in reality, a great misfortune for the king of Navarre; since, from that period, he had singly to support the whole weight of affairs, and he remained more exposed to the machinations of the League, which had only him to fear; for the prince de Conti had neither sufficient talents nor experience to be capable of filling the post of his brother; and in consequence, the overbearing arrogance of the leaguers was proportionably increased.

No sooner was the death of the prince of Condé made public, than the League ordered extraordinary rejoicings, proclaiming, that it was a deed of Divine justice, and originated in the apostolic thunders. The Huguenots, on the contrary, were in a state of stupor, under the idea that they had lost in him their most determined advocate, because they felt a conviction that he was resolute in his faith, and had not entertained the doubts of the king of Navarre. In consequence of this, the confusion and disorder was so great among the Calvinists, that it appears, in case they had been vigorously followed up at that period, they must soon have been vanquished. Henry the Third was their implacable enemy, and would freely have given his consent; but he was desirous of conducting affairs in such a way, that their overthrow should not tend to the aggrandizement of the duke of Guise and his personal destruction. The duke, however, being ignorant of his intentions, incessantly pressed him for supplies of troops to complete the exter-

mination of the reformers, in whose ruin he hoped infallibly to include that of the king of Navarre.

The duke of Guise possessed this advantage over the king, that he had acquired popular affection, principally in two ways: first, his determined opposition to the new imposts; and secondly, his unvarying attacks on the royal favourites, before whom he would never show the least submission. A conduct directly opposed to this had brought universal contempt upon the king, and had even cooled many of his adherents, of which the following fact will serve for an example.

Henry the Third possessed two great counsellors, Peter d'Espinac, archbishop of Lyons; and Villeroi, secretary of state. The duke d'Epernon, who was overbearing and haughty, thought himself licensed to treat them with marked obloquy; they in consequence felt irritated against him, and on that account espoused the interests of the duke of Guise; though doubtless remaining inherently faithful to the interests of their monarch and the realm, as was subsequently manifested, more especially in the person of Villeroi.

Notwithstanding this, the king pursued his former course of life, living in the most effeminate state of luxury and sloth, spending his time either in beholding his dogs dance, or caressing them; hearing parrots chatter; cutting out

images in paper, or other occupations far more worthy an infant than a king.

The duke of Guise, on the contrary, lost no time; he created to himself new friends, preserved his old ones, caressed the people, testified great zeal for the ecclesiastics, undertook the defence of those who were oppressed, appeared everywhere with the state and gravity becoming a prince, but without ostentation or ridiculous pride. The Parisians were more than devoted; they loved the duke with enthusiasm; the parliament alone, and those officers particularly connected with that body, did not partake of similar sentiments, still preserving their affection and duty unabated for the service of the king.

Henry the Third at length placed himself at the head of his forces, in order to complete the overthrow of the feeble remains of the *Reitres*, as the German troops were termed. They had already been driven to the frontiers by the duke of Guise; numbers were massacred by the peasantry; while the stragglers and sick were butchered without mercy. This army, which had consisted of thirty thousand men, had committed horrible devastations; it was, however, nearly annihilated, as scarcely five thousand regained their own country; such being, as we have previously remarked, the issue of this invasion.

The king arrived at Paris before Christmas, when he performed a public entry, accoutred in

armour, and wearing his helmet, as if he had proved the conqueror of all his enemies; and he was in consequence saluted by the mockery of the populace. Such ridiculous conduct, added to other similar proceedings, tended more to elevate the character of the duke of Guise in popular opinion than would have resulted from the commission of a flagrant error.

We find from the various historians of the time, that the duke of Guise assembled all the principal branches of his family, and the chiefs of the League, at the city of Nancy, when a grand council was held, where each was secretly occupied in forwarding his personal views, while vehemently descanting on the public good; a customary formula adopted by the ambitious, which deceives no one; and yet, without which, the factious would never attain the end proposed. This artificial language uniformly affords consolation to agitated consciences; since, by feigning to be the dupe, they almost conceive themselves justified. Opinions were not divided in an assembly where the desire of abolishing the royal prerogative was unanimous; a wish that coincided with the pretensions, and flattered the hopes of all. The result, therefore, of these conferences was, in reality, the positive determination of exciting so much trouble, that the king should incessantly be forced to adopt false and timid measures, in order to complete his degradation in popular opinion: it was at the same time

agreed, that he should not be urged to the last extremity, under the apprehension that he would ultimately be prompted to adopt vigorous measures, which might retrieve his character in public estimation, and even restore to him all his prerogatives. A petition to the king was in consequence drawn out, very insolent in fact, but worded with particular caution: in this document the monarch was entreated to declare himself more decidedly a supporter of *The Holy Union;* to remove from his person, and deprive of public employments, those courtiers suspected of heresy, a list of whom should be furnished, that was to contain all the individuals devoted to his interest; to grant the chiefs of the Union, as well in the interior as on the frontiers, cities, the garrisons of which should be maintained by the king; to place at their disposal a certain number of troops; to liquidate their debts; to declare a war of extermination against the heretics, and to give no quarter to prisoners.

The king did not dare reject this singular document, and had even the weakness to lead the petitioners to hope a favourable answer; but he despatched Bellievre, one of his ministers, who was bearer of his order to the duke of Guise not to return to Paris. This command, however, was merely verbal; the duke, therefore, feigned to regard it as not expressly intended: it even appears that Bellievre had not the courage to signify the same in absolute terms; he listened to the re-

presentations of the duke, and undertook to see them attended to. Bellievre, on returning to the king, received positive commands to prevent the duke's approach, which were committed to writing: when this important document, according to all the historians, was forwarded by the *post*, because the courier charged in the first instance with the despatch could not set forward, *for the want of twenty-five crowns which were not found in the royal treasury*, and which, apparently, no minister would advance; a circumstance, however, that appears scarcely credible.

The duke of Guise pretended not to have received the packet, and began his march by a circuitous route, so that all those who were despatched for the purpose of preventing his arrival at the capital were not able to meet him. The prince entered Paris by the gate of Saint Denis on Wednesday the 9th of May, 1588, accompanied only by seven persons, *comprising masters and valets*, says Davila; but the Parisians, by whom he was so much adored, precipitately rushed from their houses to behold, surround, and escort his person, proclaiming him their deliverer, and filling the air with incessant acclamations of "*Long live Guise! long live the protector of the faith!*" Many were observed to bend their knees before him and kiss the hem of his garment, while ladies from all the windows scattered branches, crowns of laurel, and flowers, in his road. The duke, calm and serene, spoke graciously to all such as surrounded him: to those

at a distance he displayed the most courteous movements, made salutations to the casements with an affable and smiling countenance, and proceeded bareheaded at a slow pace amidst the countless multitude, and acclamations that were every moment enthusiastically reiterated. Followed by this escort, he alighted at the hôtel de Soissons, where the queen mother resided; who changed colour on beholding him, and was seized with a trembling which betrayed her internal trouble and all the fears that agitated her soul. The duke then stated, that he came for the purpose of justifying himself to the king. After a message had been despatched to the Louvre, Catherine consented to conduct the duke; upon which they proceeded thither, the queen being carried in her chaise, and the duke proceeding on foot conversing tranquilly at her side, while an immense concourse surrounded them. On gaining the Louvre, he found the guard doubled; the Swiss were ranged in close lines, while the archers and a crowd of gentlemen were stationed in all the saloons it was requisite to traverse. The cold and melancholy looks of all he encountered were sufficient to excite emotion in the soul, but the duke preserved the most undaunted demeanour.

Anquetil states, that at the moment Guise arrived, the king and his council were deliberating in private as to the feasibility of his assassination; and that, just as he was announced, one of the counsellors exclaimed, "*Strike the pastor, and the*

flock will disperse!" On entering, Henry the Third, eyeing the prince with a stern countenance, thus addressed him: "*I had sent express orders that you should not come.*"—"*Fully aware,*" replied the duke, "*of the calumnies heaped upon me by those near your majesty, I am come to offer my head, if it be deemed culpable. I should not, however, have presented myself, had your majesty deigned to utter a more express command.*" These conclusive words led to an explanation between the duke and Bellievre, whom the king had summoned in order to convince the prince of his disobedience. While this parley took place, the queen mother drew her son aside, and explained to him, that in case the least violence was done to the duke's person, every thing was to be apprehended from the fury of the populace assembled in multitudes before the palace. Guise, whose wary eye led him to take advantage of every thing, profited by this moment of irresolution, and, under pretext of fatigue, after having offered a short and respectful justification, made a profound reverence, and retired. The populace who continued without, on beholding him, renewed the most violent acclamations; which redoubled joy seemed to express the fears they had entertained during this short and singular interview. The duke was then led in triumph to his hotel; from whence, after mid-day, he proceeded to the queen mother's residence, whither the king also repaired: upon which occasion a long conference took place in the garden, from whence were

distinctly heard the murmurings of the people assembled outside the walls, who expressed themselves in terms of reproach against the monarch, and cries of "*Long live Guise!*" The duke, at length emboldened, made known his exorbitant pretensions without farther ceremony; and he particularly insisted on the dismissal of the duke d'Epernon and his brother De la Valette from court. The first had succeeded to the full plenitude of favour previously experienced by Joyeuse; and he was most particularly hated by the factious for his strong attachment to the monarch, and the natural energy of his character. The king had the weakness to accede to these proposals, only upon condition that the duke of Guise, in concert with himself, should interpose his credit to dismiss those soldiers and adventurers, who had for some time past infested the city. It appears very singular the monarch should not have known that the very individuals in question had been expressly summoned to Paris by the Guise faction; and, if the king was aware of the fact, he could not apply to a worse source in order to rid himself of those obnoxious strangers. The duke promised to acquiesce with all the wishes of his sovereign, being at the same time determined to act in a manner diametrically opposite. A proclamation was immediately issued, enjoining that such persons as could not adduce sufficient reasons for their continuance in the city should immediately absent themselves from Paris. The commissioners

appointed to make the necessary researches laboured with assiduity during the whole of Wednesday, but without success, the citizens having voluntarily concealed the strangers. The people murmured aloud on having their mansions visited, and loaded the individuals employed with injuries and insults; who, in consequence, made their reports to the king, upon which he determined on adopting decisive measures.

In the *Chron. Novennaire* of D'Aubigné, we find that Henry the Third assembled the nobility, demanded troops, and placed companies of the opulent citizens under arms, who were naturally the enemies of commotions, as they were sure to become eventually the sufferers. Guise, on the other hand, despatched emissaries to the different quarters of the city: he caused it to be intimated to his colleagues that they must continue on their guard, and prepare to assemble on the first signal given: they spread the report of a great plot, which was to commence by a massacre of an hundred and twenty catholics by the king's order; lists of the proscribed were disseminated, among whom they did not fail to insert the names of those most dear to the people, namely, of the duke of Guise and his principal adherents. On Thursday the 12th of May, at four in the morning, a detachment of four thousand Swiss, followed by two thousand foot, entered Paris by the gate St. Honoré. The king repaired thither in person to receive them: he exhorted them to use moderation, and pointed

out the various posts they were to occupy; whither they marched with drums beating, and bearing arms. The populace, astonished and uneasy, beheld them pass in silence and without testifying the least sign of rebellion. In this manner they took possession of the principal places, and established bodies of guards. If, during such an interval of surprise and consternation, the king had seized the persons of the duke of Guise and a few of the other leading chiefs, all the projects of the disaffected would have been overthrown. The king was empowered, from their conduct, to cause their trial, when public proceedings would have brought to light all their criminal manœuvres; upon which their condemnation must have been as certain as it was legitimate. The greatest of all political errors is, that any treason can prove of real utility; but a vigorous line of conduct, adopted at a proper period and conformably with justice—an equitable and legal trial, would have sufficed on this occasion to have re-established the royal authority and the character of the monarch.

In this instance Henry the Third committed another great fault. He did not think fit to take possession of the square Maubert, for the very reason, above all others, that should have decided him so to do. As that quarter of the city abounded in multitudes of the labouring classes, butchers, mechanics, &c., the king was apprehensive that the troops would be compelled to have re-

course to violence in that quarter, and the soldiers had particularly been ordered to avoid such a proceeding. Owing to this circumstance, the tumult actually commenced on the bridge of Saint Michael and in Maubert-square, where an impulse of humanity on the part of the monarch had been construed into weakness and fear. Hatred never attributes generous considerations to any other sentiment than weakness or pusillanimity. The concourse of mutineers became agitated in a moment, and communicated the dangerous effervescence with astonishing rapidity to all quarters of Paris. Some flew to arms, others tore up the pavement of the streets, piling up large heaps of stones in their windows, they raised barricadoes with planks, beams, furniture, and every thing they could lay their hands upon. The alarm-bells were rung, and the labours of the populace were followed up with inconceivable activity: the troops receiving no order, suffered themselves to be hemmed in; so that in less than four hours all the streets of that immense city were without any outlet, and the mutineers insolently raised their last barrier directly in front, and within fifty paces, of the Louvre. Such is the recital which all contemporaneous historians have recapitulated, without reflecting on the astonishing singularity of the event. It is nevertheless impossible to conceive how six thousand armed soldiers, well disciplined, could not have prevented the rabble from barri-

cadoing the streets with so much care and alacrity as to have blocked them in, without opposing the least resistance.

During this period the duke of Guise continued shut up in his hotel, having persons stationed at the back of his mansion to facilitate his escape should it be found necessary. As soon, however, as the prince was given to understand that the barricadoes had succeeded, he issued forth into the streets, giving directions to the bearers of expresses, who were every moment despatched to him by the factious. The king, finding the danger increase, several times forwarded his commands to the duke, whom he required to stop the tumult; to which the prince coolly remarked, "*They are bulls escaped; it is impossible for me to restrain them.*" On a sudden one general cry of tumult and horror resounded; arising from the troops blocked up and prisoners in the streets; upon whom the populace hurled stones and missiles from the windows, when a considerable number were killed, and many grievously wounded. The duke of Guise then marching forward with a small cane in his hand, the barricadoes were levelled before him wheresoever he wished to pass: he harangued the populace, calmed its fury, delivered the soldiers, whom he despatched to the Louvre, fearless of affording that succour to the king, whom he was desirous of dethroning. The troops retired disgracefully, bareheaded, no drums beating, with arms bent downwards and reversed. All the strangers, par-

tisans of the duke, as well as the people, immediately appeared in arms. Guise then examined the barricadoes, despatched officers to reinforce some, and appointed a regular guard for the night. The provost of the merchants, according to custom, wished to give the name of the king as a pass-word; but the people refused, substituting that of the duke. While these transactions occurred in the city, the court issued orders for the safety of the Louvre; while the queen mother advised a negotiation, and undertook to conduct it, humiliating herself so far as to submit to wait upon the duke at his own hotel.

During this conference the duke of Guise completely unmasked himself, if his pretensions, as enumerated by Davila, are correct. He demanded the appointment of lieutenant-general of the kingdom, accompanied by unlimited authority over the troops and every thing connected with the war department; which post was to be confirmed to him by the states general, whom the king was to engage to convoke at Paris without delay;—that, independent of this, ten strong places of the kingdom were to be awarded him, with funds to support the troops who should be appointed to garrison them. He also insisted upon an edict being passed, which should declare the princes of the house of Bourbon excluded from the throne as heretics. He required that the government of Paris should be vested in Brissac; a man devoted to his interest, who had espoused the cause of the League in consequence of the

king having spoken contemptuously of him in public. During this tumult, called *The Day of the Barricadoes,* count de Brissac united himself with the duke to appease the fury of the people, levelled against the Swiss troops; upon which occasion, turning towards some persons who accompanied him, he said in a sarcastic tone, "*I have at length found a footing: the king says that I am good for nothing either on land or sea; he must, at all events, confess that I am good upon the pavement.*" For his relatives and friends the duke demanded the governments of Picardy, Normandy, Lyons, and the principal provinces; together with military employments and posts connected with the crown. He stipulated that the duke d'Epernon should be exiled, together with a long list of individuals gifted with talents, who were to be sent out of the kingdom; and lastly, he required that the monarch should be satisfied with his ordinary guard, and that the forty-five gentlemen should be dismissed, whom he had stationed about his person a short time before in order to form a rampart against the enterprises of the leaguers.

Catherine made strong remonstrances respecting these exorbitant demands: she, however, did not quit the duke without hopes of success; and then returned to the Louvre, where the ministers spent the night in fruitless deliberations with the king. On the ensuing day, the queen mother set forward for the duke's hotel; which, considering her years, was a real fatigue; because,

as the rebels would not open the barricadoes for her carriage, in her passage from one street to another, she was under the necessity of being lifted over by manual force in her chaise. Upon one of these occasions, a citizen, under pretext of aiding Catherine, approached her ear, stating, in a whisper, that fifteen thousand men were then marching from the country to invest the Louvre; upon which the queen sent one of her gentlemen to give the king timely notice of the circumstance, when she proceeded on her route.

On her introduction to the duke, Catherine began to converse on the propositions of the preceding day; when the former did not appear disposed to relinquish a single point. The queen, however, as it is said, persisted in her representations for the purpose of prolonging the conversation; when, in the midst of this parley, the Lord de Mainville arrived, and stated to the duke that the king had quitted Paris. On hearing this unexpected intelligence, the duke of Guise unintentionally suffered his secret to escape him, exclaiming: "*Madame, I am a dead man! While your majesty amuses me here, the king is hastening to effect my downfall.*"—"*I was totally ignorant of this proceeding*," replied Catherine, with great *sang-froid:* upon which, returning to her chaise, she proceeded immediately towards the Louvre.

The French guards and the Swiss had already left Paris; and the courtiers, as well as the nobility, followed their steps with all expedition.

The queen mother transmitted orders to the troops to hasten their march with all possible celerity, in order to rejoin the king, who was only accompanied by thirty followers. Henry the Third slept that night in a village, and arrived at Chartres the following day; where Nicholas de Thou, bishop of that city, procured him an honourable reception, notwithstanding the adverse attempts of the leaguers.

When pope Sixtus the Fifth was given to understand that the duke of Guise had returned to Paris, and placed himself at the disposal of the king, whom he had so much offended, his exclamation was—"*Oh! what fool-hardiness!—what imprudence!*" But when he learned that the king had suffered that favourable occasion to escape, when he might have annihilated the man who seemed born for his destruction, the pontiff, raising his voice still higher, cried out, "*Oh! the weak prince!*" And the holy father doubtless continued his emphatic words on learning that the duke, in turn, had permitted the monarch to effect his escape.

Reasoning upon this subject, Pasquier says: "*Since the duke had the temerity to present himself, the king ought to have secured his person. This he might have effected on the Tuesday and Wednesday, because he then had at his disposal the captains of the several posts, all the high courts, the wealthy citizens, and four thousand Swiss, independent of his body guard: the lower classes would not have dared to show themselves. Even on the Thursday morning,*

he might have surrounded him with his troops, if, from a bad policy, he had not, as it were, shackled the hands of his soldiers, by commanding them not to act against the populace when they commenced the barricadoes. But as the duke of Guise had surmounted all these difficulties, he should never have suffered the king to escape. He ought, in despite of himself, to have assumed a post near his person; and, subsequently, any declaration that was required might have been extracted from him."

Cayet, de Serres, and Brantome are of opinion, that such was the intention of the duke of Guise, who only suffered himself to be anticipated by the king, owing to his reliance on the monarch's indecision. The fears of Henry the Third were by no means chimerical; it was high time he should seek safety in flight: a large body of men was prepared to invest the Louvre in the direction of the open country, as well as in the interior of the city; and some bands of troops, who were already in advance, fired upon him and his retinue as he escaped; while the populace, in default of other arms, assailed him with abuse.

In the provinces, the partisans of the duke made levies; destined, no doubt, for the reinforcement of the Parisians, who would have formed the blockade of the Louvre. The intention, therefore, of the duke was not to drive the king from Paris; his project, on the contrary, being to retain him. The prince, writing to one of his friends, says; "*I have defeated the Swiss; I have*

cut in pieces part of the king's guards; and keep the Louvre so closely blockaded, that I shall give a good account of those whom it contains."

After the king's escape, one of the duke's confidants wrote to those who were collecting troops in the provinces; in which letter he thus expressed himself: "*Our great chief did not know how to execute his design, the king having escaped to Chartres. I am of opinion that you should retire to your respective dwellings as quietly as you can, without appearing to have witnessed any thing. I am so completely stupefied, that I know not what I do.*"

The dauntless spirit of the duke of Guise, however, was not to be intimidated by this unexpected reverse. The king having escaped, he nevertheless felt assured of ultimately subduing him; he assembled the people, nominated new city officers and captains more attached to his interest than their predecessors; when, having rendered himself complete master of the capital, he commanded the populace to relinquish their arms, and detach the chains from the barricadoes. The duke then repaired to the first president De Harlay, whom he could neither seduce nor intimidate. That respectable magistrate, who was walking in his garden, did not deign to turn his head at the noise which the arrival of the prince and his retinue created; and on meeting him as he turned one of the walks, Harlay listened with gravity to the specious arguments of the duke, mingled with flattery, promises, and threats; when he pronounced these words,

which an historian should never be weary of repeating: "*It is a great pity when the valet drives away his master! As for any thing else, my soul is with God, my faith continues with my king, and my body is in the power of the wicked, who may deal with it as they think fit.*" Guise continued to press the topic, conjuring Harlay to convoke the parliament for the purpose of adopting measures, conjointly with himself, suited to the emergency of circumstances. "*Where the majesty of the prince is violated,*" answered Harlay with a stern demeanour, "*the magistrate no longer possesses any authority.*" Having pronounced these words, the president turned round and resumed his promenade. Guise, speechless and confused, must then have felt that virtue alone is the basis of true greatness of soul.

Guise, however, was not to be disheartened, and he applied to the president Brisson, whom he found less adverse to his wishes; he also repaired to the foreign ministers, related the whole event in a manner tending to his own exculpation, and solicited them to forward statements to their respective courts, which should not prove to his disadvantage, but conformable with the manifestoes he had distributed in every direction. He seized the Arsenal and the Bastille, the government of which he confided to Bussy le Clerc, procurator to the parliament and one of the most determined advocates for the League, on which account he had been chosen one of the *Sixteen*. In addition to those fortresses, the

duke also got possession of the castle of Vincennes and Corbeil, for the purpose of commanding the Seine; and he equally made an attempt on Melun, but Tristan de Rostaing, who had thrown himself into that town, preserved it for the king. The provost of the merchants was arrested and consigned to the Bastille; and as the three first sheriffs had followed the king to Chartres, the council of *Sixteen* chose La Chapelle Marteau for provost, who was not elected, according to the customary forms, by scrutiny, but by the voices of the people. This individual had particularly signalized himself at the affair of the Barricadoes, and was named secretary of the League. He was charged, says De Thou, in the informations collected after the assassination of Henry the Third, with having held a conference with James Clement the very day when that traitor left the capital to execute the parricide. Marteau was cited by sound of trumpet to appear as an accomplice, having fled on the surrender of Paris. He escaped to Spain, where he died in wretchedness, in common with all the leaguers, who, terrified at their own crimes, became voluntary exiles, and in consequence could not participate in the clemency of Henry the Fourth.

The duke of Guise having adopted these precautions, complete order was established in Paris, so that the day after the king's departure every thing was as tranquil as if no commotion had taken place; and in this state of things the prince

continued to listen to the propositions of the queen mother, who remained at Paris for the sole purpose of negotiating. While these steps, however, were adopted, the king and the duke mutually forwarded manifestoes to the provinces, making known to the principal cities every thing that had transpired. These documents produced different sensations, according to the diversity of opinions; but their most apparent effect was the disunion of families, which too fatally announced the commencement of another cruel and sanguinary civil war.

Such was the existing state of things, when the leaguers of the capital conceived an idea that a submission to Henry the Third, heightened by a religious ceremony, would lead the king to forget the past, and effect his return to Paris. Under this supposition, the famous fraternity of the Penitents, formerly so dear to Henry the Third, quitted the capital on foot, and proceeded to attend him at Chartres. Care had been taken to make every thing appear singular in this ludicrous procession; but in order that the reader may judge for himself, we will quote the narrative of De Thou, an eye-witness of the whole transaction.

"First appeared a man with a long beard, in the most filthy condition, habited in vestments of hair cloth, over which appeared a large shoulder-belt, from whence was suspended a broad-sword in form of a Turkish scimitar, while from an old rusty trumpet he at intervals blew

the most harsh and discordant sounds; after the above boldly marched three other men, equally dirty, each bearing on his head an old greasy saucepan, instead of an helmet, wearing over shirts of hair cloth coats of mail, with brassets and gauntlets, and by way of arms they supported old rusty halberds: these three blusterers rolled about their haggard and furious eyes, and conducted themselves in such a manner as to disperse the mob assembled to view the spectacle.

"After the above marched brother Ange de Joyeuse, (formerly a courtier, and brother of the duke of that name, recently killed at the battle of Coutras,) who had the preceding year made his profession as a Capuchin friar. He had been persuaded, in order to soften the heart of Henry the Third, to represent in this procession the Saviour ascending Mount Calvary: for which purpose he had suffered himself to be bound with cords, and his face was painted so as to represent drops of blood running from his head, crowned with thorns; he appeared to drag with difficulty a long crucifix, made of painted pasteboard, and at intervals purposely fell down, uttering the most piteous lamentations.

"On either side advanced two Capuchins, wearing painted garments; one representing Mary and the other Magdalen. They devoutly elevated their eyes to heaven, squeezing out at times some false tears; and as often as brother Ange de Joyeuse chose to fall down, they pro-

strated themselves before him, trembling every limb. Four satellites, very nearly resembling the three first, held the rope, wherewith brother Ange was bound, striking him with a whip, the cracks from which resounded afar. This procession concluded with an immense retinue of penitents."

On beholding this pious masquerade pass before the court in the cathedral of Chartres, which entered singing *Miserere*, the brave warrior Crillon, a relation of Joyeuse, exclaimed, "*Whip away in earnest, strike hard; he is a coward who has covered his back with a frock in order that he may avoid carrying arms.*" The king, instead of relishing this indecent mummery, gravely reprimanded his former favourite, Ange Joyeuse, for thus having, from an imprudent zeal, turned into ridicule the sacred mystery of the redemption. He also made known to him, that his credulity had been imposed upon, in thus engaging him, under pretext of religion, to place himself at the head of the rebels; "*whom I well know,*" added Henry, elevating his voice, "*to be in great numbers among this procession.*"

Of this circumstance the monarch was fully aware; having been told, that among other persons of the faith, under sacks of penitents, were concealed, a crowd of the most ardent leaguers, who impudently came for the purpose of encouraging their associates at Chartres, and engaging them to take the oath of fidelity to the duke of Guise. They were then in his power; he might have punished, and yet he permitted

them to accomplish their mission. Being thus tolerated, they speedily scattered the seeds of revolt throughout the city, and the consequence was, the king's being compelled to depart. Henry the Third went to Vernon, and from thence to Rouen, which city he fixed upon as his residence during the negotiations entered into by the queen mother.

The burlesque embassy of the leaguers was speedily followed by a deputation from the parliament of Paris, which the king thanked, at the same time exhorting the magistrates to continue their services to him as faithful subjects. This was followed by another deputation of the municipal officers, in the name of the city itself. Henry gave them a favourable reception, although he did not approve the changes effected in that corps by the duke of Guise. It was obvious that he would have been satisfied, and led to pardon, had any decent reparation been proposed. These deputations gave rise to certain propositions; sometimes the king addressed himself to the body *en masse;* and at others, he conversed with a few chosen members. There were also petitions from the League, and the royal answers, which were made public; but even had the most exorbitant desires of the *Sixteen* been complied with, that was of no avail unless the consent of the duke of Guise was procured. It therefore became necessary to negotiate direct with that prince; and, upon this his pretensions were demanded, which proved as outrageous as

the stipulations required on the eve of the Barricadoes. The king, dissembling his indignation, contented himself with remarking, that, during the ensuing month of March, he would convoke the states general of his kingdom, at the city of Blois, for the purpose of applying some remedy to the abuses that might have crept into the government, and to hear the complaints of his subjects.

When the king of Navarre became acquainted with these events, the remembrance of the vile proceedings of Henry the Third towards him, never for a moment retained possession of his heart; he only felt inspired with just indignation at the outrages which had been committed to the scandal of all the crowned heads of Europe. He testified upon this occasion his deep sorrow when holding his council; and, the determination of defending and supporting the king of France having been approved unanimously, Henry immediately forwarded his secretary to assure the prince that his person and his forces were alike at his disposal. Henry the Third, however, yielding to irresolution, the uniform attendant on excessive weakness, did not know how to take advantage of this generous and disinterested offer.

During the interval that elapsed previous to the meeting of the states at Blois, the duke of Guise only thought of fortifying his own party, and to attain this end strove to enchain the king, en-

gaging the queen mother to mediate between the monarch and himself. Catherine, whose sole policy and secret actions always tended to sow divisions and create misunderstandings, spent her whole life in negotiations, cabals, and undertaking the part of a mediatrix. Henry the Third consented to ratify the most disgraceful and humiliating peace, which was proclaimed under the title of *The Edict of Union*. Among the articles of this treaty the only clause advantageous to the king, (but which was not carried into effect,) was the placing at his disposal the fortresses of the Bastille and the Arsenal. The duke of Guise was declared generalissimo, with absolute authority over the armies; while the leaguers took possession of the strong places which were abandoned to them. The king recalled his most faithful commanders from several provinces, in order to replace them by creatures of the duke of Guise. The principal favourites were expelled from the court; the haughty Epernon, however, did not think fit to await being exiled, but voluntarily retired, not without expressing in the most forcible terms the indignation with which he felt inspired. This nobleman sought refuge in the city of Angouleme, from whence the inhabitants soon afterwards, excited by his enemies, wished to drive him away. Epernon, without provisions or powder, retired to the castle, uncovered in all directions, having in his retinue only twenty men; supported by whom he maintained the attacks of the whole city during thirty hours, when

the inhabitants constantly driven back, thus routed and discouraged, at length abandoned the enterprise.

The duke of Guise, however, solely taken up with his vast projects, successfully occupied himself in forming the states general that were to assemble at Blois, solely of his own partisans. Conciliatory measures, specious considerations, and hypocritical respect for the sovereign, were no longer worthy being attended to; the royal authority was at an end, for the king could be guilty of no further self-degradation. The duke of Guise had attained that fatal point when the most undisguised and daring ambition is the only measure that can attain success. Useless fawning and dissimulation were no longer prudential measures, but, on the contrary, would have been deemed great political faults. When only one step farther is required to attain the end proposed, it becomes necessary to display confidence and daring. The uniform proceedings of the duke of Guise plainly demonstrate that his aim was to dethrone Henry the Third, consign him to a cloister, place the phantom of a king on the throne, namely, the old cardinal de Bourbon, and then cause himself to be proclaimed presumptive heir to the crown.

The king, finding it impossible to conceal from himself the truth of these guilty projects, and in the perilous state of his affairs had not sufficient courage and greatness of soul to have recourse to legitimate means of defence; but on ratifying

the ignominious edict of the *Union*, he secretly swore to avenge himself, and from that moment the ruin of Guise was resolved on: thence arose the facility with which he acceded to every proposition, which ought to have brought to the mind of the duke all that the court had formerly yielded to admiral Coligny and the leaders of his party, prior to the massacre of Saint Bartholomew. But Providence spread before the eyes of the duke of Guise that impenetrable veil which had formerly abused its victim, in hiding from him every thing calculated to enlighten his understanding. Similar presumption and self-security, and the same contempt for all wholesome advice, precipitated the murderer of Coligny into the same snare, and subjected him to experience a similar destiny.

The king received the duke of Guise, and did not testify the least resentment, but, on the contrary, loaded him with honours and kindnesses. Under these circumstances, says Mathieu, the states of Blois were opened on the 16th of October, 1588, in the great hall of the castle. They elected as presidents for the clergy the cardinals of Bourbon and Guise; the count de Brissac and baron de Magnac were placed at the head of the nobility; and La Chapelle Marteau, provost of the Parisian merchants, presided over the popular interests. From hence it was obvious that the leaguers had a preponderating voice in the states general. The duke of Guise, as grand master of the royal household, did the honours

of the first sitting. "*The deputies,*" says Mathieu, the historian, "*having entered and the door being closed, the duke of Guise, seated in his chair, habited in white satin with the cape turned up, piercing the crowded assembly with his looks, in order to recognize his associates, and with a single glance fortifying them with a hope of his advancement, his fortune and his grandeur, seemed to say without speaking, I behold you; then rose, and, followed by two hundred gentlemen and captains of the guard, retired for the purpose of conducting the king, who entered the assembly full of majesty, carrying the grand order suspended from his neck.*" On such occasions Henry the Third really appeared with becoming dignity; he pronounced a very noble and feeling harangue, adopting at once the language of a monarch and a father, but with too much regard for the leaguers; yet when the question was agitated as to the printing this speech, the archbishop of Lyons, friend of the duke of Guise, had the audacity to request the king would still moderate the expressions which referred to the League, and his majesty consented.

The situation of the king became more critical every day, says the journal of Henry the Third. He knew beyond the possibility of a doubt that the duke was carrying on some plot of the last importance, and that he offered employments, places, and governments, to those who were willing to attach themselves to his interests, as if he had been the entire master. His next pretension was that the states should elect him constable of

France; and while this measure was in agitation, he held a long conversation with marshal D'Aumont, a very virtuous man and a staunch friend to his sovereign: he conjured him to unite *for the welfare of the state;* promising as a recompense, in case he complied, the post of governor of Normandy; but finding that the marshal listened to his representations with coldness, he drew forth a poniard, lifted up the sleeve of his dress, displayed his naked arm, and was desirous of opening a vein for the purpose of ratifying the promise with his blood; the marshal, upon this, stopped the duke short, and speedily terminating the conversation, recapitulated the whole immediately after to the king.

Guise, having no longer any measures to keep, demanded a body guard in quality of generalissimo, similar to that which had been appointed for the king, when duke of Anjou, at the period of his being created lieutenant-general of the kingdom by his brother Charles the Ninth: this, however, was refused; upon which he had the temerity to complain aloud, and even threaten his sovereign. The king being unwilling to grant the League the city of Orleans as a post of surety, the duke, on learning that circumstance, remarked, "*I shall know how to preserve it in spite of him.*" And the duchess de Montpensier, sister of the duke, carried at her side a pair of gold scissors, "*which would serve,*" she remarked, "*to crop Henry's monastic tonsure, when he should be incarcerated in a monastery.*"

It was not without apprehension that the friends of the duke witnessed so much insolence; they exhorted him in vain to moderation. And when they remarked the danger to which he exposed his wife and children, as yet very young, Guise replied; "*Deprived, at the tenderest age, of a father, by the perfidious hands of the heretics, remaining with my brother exposed to all the shafts of the enemies of our house, have I failed to raise myself, to collect the remnants of the fortune of so great a father, and even to avenge him? I rely on the power of Omnipotence, which has hitherto preserved me for their preservation; but I was not instrumental to their coming into this world, that they should stand between me and my projects. If death awaits me before they attain the age of maturity, let them realize their own fortunes, as I have mine, and by their conduct show themselves the worthy inheritors of those to whom they are indebted for existence.*"

The king, who might perhaps have been led to renounce his projects of vengeance, urged to extremities, became more determined, and he therefore hurried on the moment of the catastrophe, which was to annul the assembly of Blois.

The duke was given to understand, in a thousand ways, the great misfortune that awaited him, by means of his friends and anonymous letters. One day, as he seated himself at table, he found a note concealed under his napkin, written by an unknown hand, wherein he was advertised of the king's design in regard to him; upon which he wrote the following words at the

bottom of the letter with a pencil: "*He would not dare;*" and cast the billet under the table. The marchioness of Noirmoutiers, formerly the lady de Sauve, so celebrated for her intrigues of every description, travelled expressly from Paris to Blois, in order to engage the duke to seek safety in flight, or at least to be upon his guard, with all the precautions which a just suspicion ought to excite. The duke, however, was insensible to these cautions and prayers; completely wrapped up in his self-security.

Devins, chief of the League in Provence, wrote to acquaint the duke that he disapproved of his overbearing conduct; to which the latter replied, that he did not calculate on the generosity of the king, with whose dissimulation he was well acquainted; but that he confided in his timidity, and that the monarch was not ignorant, if he meditated plans against his person, that he would himself become the sacrifice. It is thus the leader of a faction, exaggerating his own importance, really believes that his death would give rise to implacable vengeance; whereas, if he falls, each thinks but of his personal interests; his faction is broken up, or a new chief is proclaimed, while he who exists no more, is only blamed for his imprudence. Legitimate power well employed, can alone inspire legitimate and lasting regrets. The adulation offered up to the leaders of factions, inspires awe in the very flatterers themselves; they conceive that they adore, or at least admire them, so long as there remains a

hope of ensuring great advantages; when he is no more, the illusion vanishes, and it is then his late followers proceed to judge him.

Henry the Third, in the first instance, addressed himself to Crillon, having sworn him to maintain the most inviolable secrecy; when he commissioned him to assassinate the duke of Guise; but the brave soldier, without hesitation, replied, that he would never fill the office of an executioner. Loignac, first gentleman of the king's chamber, and captain of the guard, was then applied to, and accepted the horrid commission.

On the 22d of December, 1588, Loignac, at daybreak, repaired to the king's closet, accompanied by nine of the most resolute men of the royal guard; the monarch having possessed himself of as many poniards as Loignac had selected murderers; saying, as he distributed them; "*It is an execution sanctioned by justice, which I demand at your hands against the most criminal man in my kingdom, whom I am permitted to punish by Divine and human laws; but, not being able to accomplish it by the ordinary course of justice, I hereby authorise you to do the deed in right of the royal power wherewith I am invested.*"

The regal prerogative, which has the right to punish assassins, is not empowered to order assassinations; but this argument, which was insufficient to seduce Crillon, was satisfactory enough to decide the band of vile wretches who had just received their commission. These men

stationed themselves in an antichamber, beside that through which the duke was to enter; and the king, followed by Ornano, De Bonivet, De la Grange, De Montigny, and D'Entragues, retired to another apartment. Henry the Third, on the preceding evening, had sent to acquaint the duke that he wished to enjoy a day of recreation, and that he would therefore hold his council at a very early hour in the morning of the 22d of December; and, fearful lest he should not attend, it was stated to Guise, that two affairs would be canvassed, not immediately connected with himself, but individuals whom he protected; which was purposely done, in order to flatter his ostentation and power. It is said, that the duke had spent the night with the marchioness de Noirmoutier, who, as we have previously stated, did every thing in her power to put him on his guard; upon which Guise remarked, that to absent himself from the states general, under existing circumstances, would be the discouraging his friends, and spurning fortune, who thus proffered him her hand. Too tender to yield to the voice of ambition, the marchioness still pressed and conjured him; but the duke proved insensible to her tears, tore himself from her arms, and flew to attend the fatal council.

On arriving at the castle, he was environed by the body-guard of the king, which escorted him to the top of the great staircase, uncovered, and soliciting him, as grand master of the royal household, to procure the payment of the sums due to

them. On beholding this troop of petitioners, the duke's escort made way, and dispersed. Having entered the council chamber, the door was closed, the guards resumed their posts, and thus prevented any information that might be intended for the prince, from reaching him.

Whether owing to fright arising from reflection, or weakness occasioned by excesses of the preceding night, the duke turned pale, and complained of sickness; when restoratives were presented, which brought him to himself. Just as he was regaining strength, a message came to inform the prince that the king wished to speak to him. He in consequence arose, and having gracefully bowed to the assembly, left the chamber; when, being embarrassed in opening the portal of the royal antichamber, an assassin with one hand seized the guard of his sword, and with the other plunged a long poniard into his stomach; others immediately inflicted wounds in his head and abdomen, fearful lest he should be shielded by a breastplate. The duke uttered a very deep sigh, and exerting all the remaining strength he possessed, escaped the hands of his murderers. With extended arms, open mouth, and lustreless eyes, he staggered to the end of the chamber, while his dying lips faltered these words, "*My God, have pity on me!*" Upon which one of the assassins coming up, scarcely touched him, ere he dropped on the floor, and instantly breathed his last. His brother, cardinal de Guise, and Peter d'Espinac, archbishop of Lyons, who were in

the council chamber, hearing a noise, were desirous of affording succour; it was, however, too late. They were immediately arrested by a royal mandate, together with the mother of the deceased, his son, his nearest relatives, the old cardinal de Bourbon, and the principal partisans of the duke, as well in the castle as in the city. Henry the Third immediately repaired to the queen mother, who was then confined to her bed by those infirmities which were hastening her to eternity. "*The king of Paris is no more, madame,*" said the monarch on entering, "*and I am henceforth king myself.*"—"*Then you have caused the duke of Guise to be assassinated!*" replied Catherine, sighing heavily. "*May God grant this death does not render you a king over nothing! My son, it is easy to cut out, but it is also requisite to sew. Have you taken all the necessary precautions?*" The king, having given his mother every assurance, retired, requesting that she would tranquillize her mind.

Henry then had a long conference with Morosin, the Pope's legate, a very gentle and prudent ecclesiastic, who, following only the duties of his station, contented himself with exhorting the king to maintain the catholic religion, without either approving or blaming the assassination of the duke of Guise. This moderation on the part of the legate led Henry to infer that the death of cardinal Guise would be equally indifferent to the court of Rome. That great ecclesiastical dignitary was looked upon

nearly as dangerous as his brother, being no less turbulent than his deceased relative, and fully capable of animating in the hearts of others that vengeance with which he felt inspired; the result therefore was, his death being alike resolved upon.

The cardinal was confined in a lofty apartment with the archbishop of Lyons: those ecclesiastics spent in prayers the day of this sanguinary catastrophe, and the night following. On the morning of the 23d, they were separated, each believing that he was destined to suffer. The cardinal, however, was speedily enlightened on this head, being informed that he had only a moment to live; upon which, throwing himself on his knees, he recommended his soul to the Almighty, and covering his head, cried, "*Execute your commission!*" when the soldiers instantly despatched him by running their halberds through his body. The remains of the two brothers, without being undressed, were consigned to quick-lime, in order that they might be destroyed, the king being fearful lest the leaguers should convert them into relics.

Such was the melancholy fate of the duke and cardinal de Guise: the first, a famous conspirator, was by no means worthy the title of a great man. In a military point of view, he never achieved one grand exploit; as leader of a party, he displayed more cunning and artifice than real genius, being frequently hurried away by the factious, but never enabled to control

them as a master. His ambitious projects originated less from his character than the circumstances in which he found himself involved; the imprudent audacity which he manifested on various occasions contributed to invest him with a false air of grandeur, whereas it was only due to his presumption and that species of courage which a simple soldier may possess, without being the result of a bold combination and an elevated genius. His policy formed at the court of Catherine de Medicis was mediocre, and in general timid, insidious; and his conduct in regard to Henry the Third full of duplicity. When, at the close of his life, he thought to have attained his object, success intoxicated him; his arrogance assumed the place of hypocrisy, he publicly braved his sovereign, and he was ruined.

After the massacre of the duke and cardinal de Guise, Henry the Third caused numerous persons to be arrested, and almost immediately restored most of them to liberty; nearly all the rest, however, ultimately escaped. The only one who remained was the young prince de Joinville, son of the late duke of Guise, and the old cardinal de Bourbon. The duke de Mayenne luckily effected his escape from Lyons one hour before the arrival of the persons sent to arrest him, and sought an asylum at his government in Burgundy.

The tragic end of the duke of Guise excited the most dreadful consternation in Paris. Such had been the general opinion of the indolence

and timid weakness of Henry the Third, that this desperate action, in the first instance, excited less indignation than astonishment and terror; in short, the deed placed the king's character in a different point of view. He might have taken advantage of this first impression, but his accustomed undecided conduct ruined every thing. The factious, on perceiving that the monarch continued inactive, as if he had obtained a decisive victory, regained courage, and assembled at the *hôtel de ville*, where they freely vented their imprecations against the king, adopted violent resolutions, and were guilty of the most absurd conduct: a numerous procession marched to the church of Saint Genevieve, all the assistants carrying wax tapers, which they extinguished in front of the altar, trampling them under foot, and crying with impious and frantic rage, "*May God thus extinguish the race of Valois!*" They elected the duke d'Aumale, brother by the mother's side, governor of Paris; who immediately collected an army to succour Orleans, which was hard pressed by the king; and in consequence the revolt became general.

The death of the duke of Guise completely changed the face of affairs, and paved the way for those new occurrences which took place in 1589, tending to hasten the succession of Henry of Navarre to the crown of France. The first public event of notoriety was the death of the queen mother, which occurred on the

5th of January, at the castle of Blois. Previous to her demise, this princess pronounced the following opinion to her son: "I bequeath to you, as my dying words, this advice: that you cherish the princes of your blood, that you always retain them near your own person, and, in particular, the king of Navarre. I have uniformly found them attached to the crown. Remember, if you wish to enjoy peace, so necessary to France, you must tolerate liberty of conscience to your subjects; as it is obvious, that the Germans and other sovereign princes, during my time, have never been able to pacify with tears those troubles which religion has occasioned in their states." This advice, says de Bury, came too late: if the queen had previously followed the example of those monarchs of whom she spoke, she would not have been the cause of all the troubles wherewith France was assailed during the period of her administration.

We have so frequently had occasion to recur to the conduct of this wicked and ambitious woman, that to detail her character would be superfluous; we shall, therefore, content ourselves by quoting the statement of Davila, who says, that after having agitated her life by the most complicated and perfidious intrigues, she died in great obscurity. She had, above all, been fond of domineering, and found that her credit was dwindling to nothing: she had long lost the confidence of her darling son, for whom

she had instigated so many plots, and embroiled herself in ceaseless cabals. She had outlived three of her children, namely, Francis the Second, Charles the Ninth, and the duke of Alençon, and left the fourth upon a throne on the eve of crumbling to nothing. Hated and despised by every faction, she must have been fully aware of the weakness of her odious policy, and was, indeed, sufficiently punished by a death-bed remorse. It is somewhat singular that a princess, who was the very soul of trouble and commotions, should have chosen by way of device, a *rainbow* with the following inscription, "*I bring light and tranquillity.*"

Henry of Navarre, says Perefixe, wisely maintained a silence on the subject of the murder of the Guises. He deplored their death, and extolled their courage; but observed that the king must have had some very powerful motives to urge his adopting such a measure; that, however, the judgments of God were great, and his grace especial, since he was avenged of his enemies without staining his conscience or his hand; and that, certain gentlemen having presented themselves before him with a firm resolution to sacrifice the duke of Guise, he had uniformly told them that he held such an act in detestation, and would never enrol them among his friends, or esteem them honest men, if they thought more upon the subject.

The king of Navarre assembled his council on hearing this great news, when it was determined

that no change in his affairs should take place, because even supposing Henry the Third was desirous of a peace, he would not dare speak upon the subject for some months, fearful lest his catholic subjects should be led to conjecture that he had sacrificed the Guises in order to favour the Huguenots; in consequence the war was continued, and some places taken on either side.

At Paris the fury of the leaguers seemed to increase every hour, so that, in order to carry things to the greatest possible extremity, they conceived the idea of instigating the faculty of theology to advocate their cause. "That respectable body," says M. Anquetil, very judiciously, in his Spirit of the League, "that useful rampart of the Faith was not more shielded than other associations formed by intriguers for the purpose of commanding. Upon such occasions sensible men, finding their efforts of no utility, retire from the scene of action; when there only remain restless spirits, of which a certain number are always found in numerous assemblies; consequently it is by no means surprising that from the most enlightened societies, decisions should emanate that would have disgraced such associations, in case the whole body of members had been present."

It was not, therefore, a full meeting of the Sorbonne, and a legal assembly composed of all its doctors, which pronounced this decree against Henry the Third; but a clandestine and irregular

sitting, unattended by the most enlightened and learned among the doctors.

By this decree the king was declared to have renounced the throne as a monarch incapable of reigning, and an assassin of the two defenders of the faith and the state, one of whom was invested with the sacred character of priest and cardinal. In consequence of this ridiculous decree, some ignorant and seditious ecclesiastics arrogated to themselves a temporal authority, which sober reason has always contended against, even in regard to the popes themselves; because religion does not empower them to depose kings, and exonerate their subjects from an oath of fidelity.

The leaguers, abandoning themselves to every excess, and being headed by Bussy le Clerc, imprisoned the parliament, and elected a new one. In the course of the evening, however, those not found upon the list of Bussy were set at liberty; while others were permitted to remain with their friends, who became their securities.

Perefixe states that it was necessary the members of the parliament should take an oath of allegiance to the League, and that on quitting the Bastille many continued to hold the parliament in Paris; while the others by degrees went to join the king, who then established their sittings at Tours, at which place they continued to be held until the reduction of Paris in 1594. Those who quitted the capital, no doubt, displayed most fidelity to their monarch; but such as continued

in Paris afterwards rendered him more essential services, as will appear in the sequel.

The widow of the duke of Guise, continues our authority, presented a petition to those constituting the parliament, who remained at Paris, in order to enquire into facts relative to the death of her husband, and also demanding commissioners to institute the process against those who should be found culpable. This petition was favourably received by the attorney-general, and the proceedings were carried on to a great length even against the person of Henry the Third; but, adds Perefixe, I cannot say to what extent, because the leaves of the parliamentary registers were torn out when Henry the Great entered Paris.

The rebels, independent of the parliament, equally imprisoned numerous persons of illustrious birth, among whom De Thou notices with eulogy Charles Choiseul Praslin. The king's armorial bearings were broken down by the people, the quarterings trampled under foot, and his portraits and statues mutilated. On the arrival of the duke de Mayenne at Paris, he confirmed the authority of the *Sixteen,* and sanctioned every thing that had been done. The leaguers and many of the friends of the duke de Mayenne, says Perefixe, were of opinion that he should assume the title of king, with which he was to be invested by the council appointed by the League; but the duke refused, contenting himself with the rank of lieutenant-general of the state and crown

of France, which he assumed as if the throne had actually been vacant, and the same was confirmed by the parliament on the 13th of March, 1589. The king's seals were broken up and others made, on one side of which appeared the armorial bearings of France, and on the reverse an empty throne; the inscription, consisting of the name and quality of the duke de Mayenne, being worded as follows, "*Charles duke de Mayenne, lieutenant of the state and crown of France.*"

Such examples produced an effect on the provinces, and in consequence nearly all the principal cities proved in a state of revolt. Marshal de Matignon, says Brantome, being at Bourdeaux, learned on a sudden that the populace, assembled in a tumultuous manner, was raising barricadoes; "*upon which he advanced with his guards, in their doublets, sword in hand, with heads bent low, and with so much resolution, that they made the people abandon this new design, which evaporated in smoke, and thus preserved that city to his sovereign.*"

The revolt became general, Rouen and many towns of Normandy following the example of Paris; Lyons and Toulouse did the same; Mans, Poitiers, Bourges, Aix, Marseilles, Arles, Laon, and Riom, equally proclaimed themselves for the leaguers; Devins excited his whole province to revolt, and the duke de Mercœur equally succeeded in regard to a portion of Brittany. The king, conceiving himself no longer in safety at Blois, retired to Tours; soon after which affairs assumed such a desperate aspect that he at length

formed the resolution, which he ought previously to have adopted, of uniting himself with the king of Navarre. The duke d'Epernon having returned to court, contributed in a great measure to effect this step; but the individual who exerted herself most efficaciously was Diana, natural sister of Henry the Third, who had been legitimatized princess of France. This lady had uniformly entertained a particular affection for the king of Navarre, and in several instances gave timely notice of the snares that were laid to entrap him. Upon this occasion she usefully employed the ascendancy she possessed over the mind of her brother, and the credit she had obtained with Henry of Navarre, on account of the services formerly rendered him. She established mutual confidence, and dissipated the clouds that tended to prevent a reconciliation; and the conditions entered upon on either side were arranged by the ministers. De Bury, in his Life of Henry the Fourth, says, that to baron de Rosny was confided the charge of this negotiation, who immediately repaired to Saint Maur, where the court resided, when he was presented to Henry the Third by M. de Villeroy. Rosny, in detailing this interview, gives the following ludicrous description of the king's appearance in his study. He wore his sword at his side, a small hood on his shoulders, a cap on his head, and a basket containing several little dogs suspended round his neck by a riband; while

speaking he continued in an erect position, and never made the least movement.

The stipulations in consequence entered into by the two monarchs were as follows:—That there should be a truce between the two kings for one year, to commence from the 3d of April; that they would unite to carry on war against the duke de Mayenne; that the king of Navarre, as a surety, should be placed in possession of the city of Saumur, an important passage on the Loire; and a free exercise of the protestant religion for himself and his army, as well as in those places where garrisons of his troops should be placed.

This treaty being agreed upon and signed, the king required the lapse of fifteen days before he gave his public acquiescence, under the hope of obtaining from the duke de Mayenne during that delay some conditions that might be found feasible. Henry the Third, says Perefixe, used every endeavour to appease the resentment of the duke, and offered him most advantageous terms; but what assurance, said the leaguers, can the prince ever be prompted to receive after his brothers have been assassinated in such a manner? Finding, therefore, all attempts at pacification were alike unavailing, the monarch was compelled to have recourse to the prince of Navarre, when on the eve of being invested in the city of Tours by the troops of the League. Henry of Navarre was in consequence summoned to the king's

assistance, having previously possessed himself of La Garnache, and taken Niort by assault, after a most sanguinary conflict; on his return from this expedition the prince fell dangerously ill: during the march Duplessis Mornay conducted the forces, and the king having dismounted amused himself with hunting, during which exercise he became heated, and was attacked by a violent pain in the side, accompanied by a raging fever, which obliged him to enter the first house upon his route, being the residence of a gentleman named La Mothe Frélon. The king's illness continued to encrease so much that fears were entertained for his safety; when Duplessis Mornay took upon himself the responsibility of causing his master to be bled, which operation saved his life. The monarch was soon re-established, and the first fruits of his convalescence were the capture of Châtelleraut; when having been given to understand that the leaguers had entered Argenton by means of a secret understanding with the inhabitants of the place, he repaired thither without losing a moment, and gained the town so opportunely as to dislodge the troops of the League before they had received the succours necessary for their subsistence. Nothing now remained but for the two monarchs to have a meeting, in order to concert the plan of operations necessary to be pursued. With this intention Henry of Navarre took the road to Du Plessis-les-Tours, when he stopped at a mill two leagues distant from the castle; and calling to mind all the per-

fidious acts and assassinations that had sullied the court to which he was on the eve of delivering himself, the prince demanded of the officers who attended him, what was their opinion in regard to the step he was then pursuing. The ideas on this subject were various, but that of Rosny was decidedly in favour of proceeding to the court, adopting all the precautions suggested by prudence on the occasion. He might have added, that the king of Navarre, from his name, his talents, and his reputation, was so essential to Henry the Third at this critical juncture, that it was impossible he should entertain the idea of treason, which, by rendering him an object of execration to the eyes of all Europe, would at the same time deprive him of the means of escaping that abyss into which he had been plunged by his weakness and bad policy.

The king of Navarre, after some moments of silence and reflection, turning towards his officers, exclaimed; "*Let us on, the resolution is adopted: we will think no more upon the subject.*"

The prince, says Perefixe, arrived at Plessis-les-Tours about three o'clock in the evening, habited in his war-accoutrements, very dirty, and much used by the friction of his cuirass; he alone wearing a cloak, all the rest being in their doublets, ready to buckle on their armour at a moment's notice, in order to prove that they did not present themselves to pay their court, but to proceed to actual service.

Henry the Third had advanced some distance

into the open country to give the king of Navarre a meeting; and the universal joy, excited by a union so universally desired, had collected such a prodigious concourse of people to witness the scene, that the two monarchs were upwards of a quarter of an hour only fifty paces distant from each other without being able to come together. At length, the king of Navarre, rushing through the crowd, ran and threw himself at the king's feet, who immediately raising, embraced him with every mark of the liveliest affection, which was frequently renewed, while the multitude redoubled their applauses, crying with transports of joy, "*Long live the kings!*" Henry the Third entitled the Prince his brother; upon which the king of Navarre exclaimed, "*Courage, sire; two Henries are worth more than one Carolus:*" alluding to a coin of the time so called, Charles being the christian name of the duke de Mayenne. The two sovereigns continued in close conversation together, being gazed at by the spectators, who were overcome by their feelings. Night approaching, the king of Navarre retired to his quarters; but, the following morning, accompanied only by a single page, he waited upon the king before he had risen; a generous confidence that sensibly touched Henry the Third, and which finally dissipated every latent idea of suspicion.

This interview proved so satisfactory to the king of Navarre, that he expressed his gratification in a letter written to M. Duplessis, which

was couched in the following terms: "*The ice is broken, not without numerous hints, that, if I went, my death would ensue. I passed the river Loire, recommending myself to God, who, by his bounty, has not only deigned to preserve me, but caused excessive joy to manifest itself on the king's countenance; and in the people, unheard-of applauses of—Long live the king; wherewith I was marvellous content. A thousand singular peculiarities also took place, which might be deemed remarkable.*"

From this juncture the royalists and Calvinists became united as brothers; they were seen cordially embracing, renewing acquaintance, accompanied by all the glowing effusions of the heart, execrating the past, throwing the whole blame of those dreadful events upon the persons who no longer existed, and mutually exhorting one another to employ all their forces and means to annihilate the common enemy. These patriotic sentiments infused themselves equally in the minds of the courtiers; and it was remarked, that the three first who marched succours to the king, were three discarded courtiers; Souvré, d'O, and Epernon. The latter had had great misunderstandings with marshal d'Aumont, and Henry the Third was in consequence fearful lest his return should renew their former animosities; the marshal, however, was the first who advised the monarch to reinstate the duke in his good graces. "*I obliterate from my mind,*" said he, "*all thoughts of resentment until your majesty shall have triumphed over all your enemies; that end accom-*

plished, if the duke desires it, we will terminate our quarrel." This frank conversation having been recapitulated to Epernon by the king himself, the former waited upon the marshal, offered excuses for the past, demanded his friendship, and then tendered his own in return. "*I am perfectly satisfied,*" answered the marshal; "*you offer me your services, and I accept them, and you may in like manner depend upon mine.—Take courage,*" continued he, embracing the duke, "*let us fight with all our hearts for the glory of our master and the salvation of the country, whose ruin the wicked have sworn to accomplish. When we shall have restored peace to France, we will then dispute together, but it shall be as to which of the two surpasses the other in generosity.*"

Henry of Navarre left the king for the purpose of expediting the march of his army, which he had left on the road, in order to join him as soon as possible. During this short absence, the duke de Mayenne, advancing rapidly with his army, arrived before Tours. The king, who happened to be taking the air with few attendants, was upon the point of being captured, an event related in the following manner by De Bury :— "It is stated, that some persons of the court who favoured the cause of the duke de Mayenne, had engaged the monarch to take an airing on that side of Tours where an ambuscade was stationed to surprise him. The king, in his way, entered a narrow path, at the termination of which the enemy's cavalry was concealed, when he hap-

pened to encounter a miller, who ran to the monarch, exclaiming; '*Sire, where are you going? the enemies are in the environs; I have just seen them; retire as fast as possible.*' On the instant some cavalry troops made their appearance, when the king, turning his horse, fled with precipitation, and gained the city of Tours in safety. Upon this, and many other occasions, it is said, that Henry the Third issued his orders with great presence of mind, and that in the encounters he often charged the enemy in person. As the army of the duke de Mayenne now began to invest Tours, couriers were despatched to the king of Navarre, desiring him to expedite the march of his forces. The duke de Mayenne attacked, and got possession of the suburb, notwithstanding the vigorous and obstinate defence of Crillon and de Rubempré. The king of Navarre, however, whose activity nothing could surpass, arrived in time to rescue the king and save the city. As soon as the enemy perceived his foremost guard, the duke de Mayenne retired. Henry of Navarre highly extolled the king's conduct, who displayed great personal courage on this occasion. The important service which the king of Navarre had thus rendered his majesty, caused him to be looked upon in the light of the deliverer of Henry the Third, and the city of Tours. The monarch acknowledged his gratitude to Henry of Navarre in the most affectionate terms, and also gave him a most signal proof, by adopting the white scarf, worn by the

king of Navarre, which was equally made the decoration of all his officers. Some catholics murmured at this, but marshal d'Aumont, Crillon, Montigny, and numerous others, approved the act, and publicly stated, that the king could not caress too much, or heap too many honours upon a chief and his followers who had displayed such praiseworthy activity and zeal in marching to his succour. The duke de Mayenne retired into Normandy; when the two monarchs resolved, in order to force him to quit that province, that troops should be collected and marched in the direction for Paris, with intent to besiege that city, hoping to succeed by rendering themselves masters of the towns that supplied the capital with provisions, the populace of which still continued furious against the king and firm adherents of the League. In the extravagant writings that were disseminated through Paris, the leaguers affirmed that the king offered up his devotion to Fauns, because the sculptures of those animals were found in the ornaments of some antique chandeliers that decorated the royal chapel. Masses were performed for the forces sent against the king, accompanied by prayers, well deserving the epithet of imprecations against his person; and among others, we find the following was a collect used upon that occasion:—*Deus ultor impietatis et sponsæ Filii tui spes unica, fac Christianæ religionis hostibus superatis, propugnatores nostros, tui honoris vindices gloriosos, et speratæ victoriæ ad nos remitte compotes: per Dominum,* &c. One

preacher having announced he should not deliver a discourse on the subject of that day's Saint, but the *enormities* of Henry of Valois, finished his harangue in these terms: "*Briefly; he is a Turk in head, a German in body, an harpy in the hands, an Englishman in the garter, a Pole in the feet, and a very demon in soul!*" See Memoirs of the League, vol. iii. p. 542.

In all the libels the sovereign was denominated *a Tyrant*, and the following most insulting anagram written upon his name:—Henri de Valois, *Vilain Herode*. These excesses, however, were but the ebullitions of a powerless rage. From the period of the king's reconciliation with Henry of Navarre, all his affairs took a most advantageous turn. Several provinces were restored to their allegiance, and the general feeling of the nation was favourable to the two monarchs thus united. Rosny received orders from Henry of Navarre to repair to Chartres, for the purpose of holding that city in awe, which the leaguers were endeavouring to seduce and separate from the king's interest. Accompanied by some other officers and six hundred horse, Rosny, without stopping or partaking of food during the day, arrived at Bonneville, a town on the borders of Perche. At this place he ascertained that a squadron of the enemy, consisting of four hundred cavalry, was in the open country; he therefore despatched three hundred arquebusiers to Chartres, and with the residue of the troop proceeded to attack the enemy, under the command of Sau-

veuse. The conflict was furious on either side; Rosny, Chatillon, Mony, Montbazon, Avantigny, and Pressaigny, evincing equal intrepidity: five times they renewed the charge, and as often did the enemy rally after being driven in. Rosny had a horse wounded and two swords broken; after which he had recourse to his large pistols, charged with steel bullets, which he had never essayed against any armour without piercing it through. The enemy at length fled from the field of battle, after losing two hundred men and abandoning many prisoners, among whom was their commander, Sauveuse. The brave royal troops were not in a situation to enjoy the fruits of this brilliant victory; wounds, exhaustion, and want of repose, had reduced them to a complete state of inaction; they no longer possessed any energy for marching, when a heavy rain came on, and it was ascertained at the same time that they were closely followed by the duke de Mayenne. In this trying dilemma a hasty deliberation took place, when it was decided, that, notwithstanding the deplorable situation to which they were reduced, they should march forward during the night and endeavour to regain Beaugency; at which place they arrived so completely worn out by lassitude, that Rosny and most of the officers fell upon the beds, where they continued for many hours as if attacked by a lethargy, for it was found impossible to awake them in order that they might partake of nourishment. The fame of this

encounter being spread, the king of Navarre rode in person to Beaugency, for the express purpose of felicitating those brave warriors; upon which occasion Sauveuse, the prisoner of most consequence that had been captured, was brought before him, whom the prince strove to console by praises of his courage and the kindest treatment. Sauveuse, however, having ascertained that some of his relatives and all his friends had perished in the conflict, yielded himself up to despair, and ultimately became furious; in consequence of which he was seized with a brain fever, and expired, having prevented any thing being applied to his wounds during the paroxysms of his delirium.

After this affair, the sieges of Jargeau, Pluviers, Etampes, Poissy, Pontoise, l'Isle d'Adam, Beaumont, and Creil, took place; upon all which occasions, says Sully, "*the king of Navarre hazarded his life, as if it had been burthensome to him; he was always to be seen leading the soldiers in the midst of the greatest danger. During one of these conflicts, while stopping for a few moments to take breath, he supported himself on the shoulder of an officer named Charbonniere, when a bullet from an enemy's piece killed that brave officer upon the spot.*" Perefixe affirms, that all the towns, when capitulating, required no other surety than the promise of the king of Navarre; which they regarded as more inviolable, and preferred to all the documents signed by the king. Henry of Navarre, owing to the

ascendancy obtained by his superior courage, the generosity, prudence, acknowledged good faith, and the peculiar happy gift of gaining the ascendancy over all hearts, had restored fortune and glory to the court and camp of Henry the Third; every thing seemed to announce the speedy reduction of the rebels, the termination of troubles, and a solid and honourable peace.

The Parisians were defeated near Senlis, which town they besieged with numbers superior to those that came to its assistance. The latter were commanded by the youthful duke de Longueville, who, on this occasion, gave the most rare and touching example to his army. Abounding with courage, but not conceiving that bravery was adequate to experience, he summoned the intrepid and sage Lanoue, and, at the head of his battalions, saluted him as general, placing the forces under his direction, and exhorting the officers to recognise him in that capacity. "*As for myself,*" added the duke, "*I shall obey him as if I were but a private soldier.*" Upon this, Lanoue declared that he would only accept the honour for a few hours; and the result was the defeat of the leaguers, who in consequence abandoned the siege of the town. After the battle, the officers presenting themselves to inquire of Lanoue how they were to act? "*Come,*" said he, "*let us repair to the duke de Longueville at Senlis, and there receive his orders.*" This victory created the greatest sensation at Paris. On the day subsequent to the battle, the duke and Lanoue having

victualled Senlis, and established the security of the place, set forward to meet the Swiss, whom the faithful Sancy conducted to support the royal cause. That officer had formerly occupied the post of ambassador from France to Switzerland, where he had made himself beloved by his docile, generous, and liberal character. When Sancy perceived the extremity to which the king was reduced after the deaths of the duke and cardinal de Guise, he voluntarily offered his services to go and raise Swiss troops; this was accepted; but as there was no possibility of furnishing him with money, he sold his jewels, as well as the major part of his possessions, and proceeded to Geneva. After being subjected to the greatest difficulties with a zeal and admirable perseverance, he collected ten thousand Switzers; to whom he added a thousand German infantry, and twelve hundred Reitres; the whole raised at his own expense. Having thus far succeeded in his embassy, he despatched an account of his success to the king by a gentleman who assumed the disguise of a vender of charcoal; in which costume, and conveying his merchandise, he joined the monarch in safety, at Chalons, having completely traversed the encampments of the leaguers. Sancy led on his little army by Franche-Comté, and conducted himself with so much caution, that he arrived at Conflans, near Paris, without the loss of a single man; at which city he formed a junction with Henry the Third.

Sancy had abjured Calvinism, which alienated

from him the minds of the reformers, who in consequence wrote many satirical things against him. D'Aubigné, in particular, was very acrimonious, although no man was more honourable in principle: but the nature of circumstances tended to render vindictive those who were otherwise the most estimable characters.

These additional forces of Sancy, added to the Calvinists and nobility, who flocked to the royal standard from all parts, placed Henry the Third at the head of an army of forty thousand men, consisting of valiant soldiers, and experienced leaders, well armed, and fully provided with necessaries for the troops. Paris trembled, and the monarch in this prosperous situation yielded himself up to those just and pleasing hopes, which nothing but the intervention of a crime could have annihilated. These sentiments were, however, diminished, in consequence of a papal admonition, which menaced the king with being excommunicated, if, within sixty days, he did not liberate all the ecclesiastics who were imprisoned, and perform penance for the murder of the duke and cardinal de Guise. The unfortunate monarch, however, ceased to exist before the expiration of the term prescribed by the Holy See.

On the above occasion, the king having manifested some alarm in presence of Henry of Navarre, the latter, with his accustomed frankness, remarked, "*There is an excellent remedy; which is,*" said he gaily, "*that we must conquer, and the soonest possible: for if that takes place, you*

will most undoubtedly receive your absolution; whereas, if we are defeated, we shall always be excommunicated, overturned, and beaten down."

The duke de Mayenne, shut up in Paris, made every disposition to defend himself which the trifling means he possessed enabled him to accomplish. He caused bastions to be erected, dug fosses, and formed lines, behind which he thought at least to sell his life dearly; for the small number of his troops, incapable of manning such a vast extent, did not permit a hope that he should be able to repel the assailants.

On the 10th day of July, 1589, the king being master of the bridge of Saint Cloud, established his quarters at that town, lodging at the mansion of Jerome Degondy. Henry of Navarre took up his post at Meudon, distributing the troops that formed the foremost guard in the villages of Vanvres, Issy, Vaugirard, &c. Every thing being in readiness for the siege of Paris, some zealots among the leaguers, to escape the danger that awaited their party, conceived the treasonable plan of causing the king's assassination.

The individual suborned for this purpose was a Jacobin monk, named James Clement, a native of the village of Sorbonne in Senonois, twenty-two years of age; ignorant, weak in intellect, of a sombre and melancholy temper; and if historians are to be credited, very debauched in his habits. He was at that period a student in theology, when the schools teemed with nothing but such detestable maxims as its being lawful to mur-

der tyrants, which he heard thundered forth with the most daring effrontery from the pulpits of the public preachers, who continually described Henry of Valois in horrible colours, uttering the most odious invectives and bitter calumnies against that prince. The tutors of this fanatic monk, found great facility in persuading him that religion stood in need of his arm, in its support against the efforts of a prince who sought to destroy it by favouring heresy. The most sacred parts of Scripture were in consequence perverted in order that he might be led to contemplate the glory, honours, and rewards which might be hoped for, if he performed the part Heaven pointed out to him, and thus rescue France from the tyrant who oppressed her. They compared Clement to Jehu, and Judith, who had saved the Jewish nation from Holofernes. During his hours of repose, they contrived that voices should assail his ears, which were represented as emanating from heavenly ministers, confirming him in the design with which he had been inspired. Edme Bourgoin, his director, and a most determined leaguer, was accused of having planned this detestable artifice; for which he suffered death, being afterwards torn to pieces by four horses.

Nearly all the historians of that period declare that the implacable duchess de Montpensier, had several private conferences with James Clement; and that, for the purpose of bringing him to perpetrate the deed, she had recourse to every ex-

pedient which a woman still possessed of personal attractions, and divested of every virtuous principle, could employ to stimulate a young man already addicted to debaucheries: it appears at least certain, that on the eve of the crime she spent a part of the day in private with the assassin. This wretch, protected by the duchess, and aided by numerous preconcerted artifices, was provided with all the necessary passports, purporting to be given by the count de Brienne, then a prisoner in the Louvre; and a forged letter of credit from the president, also incarcerated in the Bastille. Clement left Paris in the night of July the 31st, and was stopped at Vaugirard by one of the king of Navarre's guard, who ordered him to be set at liberty. From thence he repaired to Saint Cloud, and addressed himself to the duke of Angoulême, requesting that he would procure for him an audience with the king. The duke himself, according to Mathieu, stated that he was shocked at the repulsive physiognomy of the man: however, without duly reflecting, he contented himself by saying that his majesty had retired, and that he could not then see him. Clement in consequence repaired to the residence of the solicitor-general, La Guesle, and having presented the spurious letter of De Harlay, the former recognised the writing of the superscription as being that of the president; upon which he interrogated Clement as to the purport of his journey. The latter, with perfect composure, then stated, that

he came on the part of Harlay, charged with several important communications for the king; when, La Guesle being unable to gain any thing farther from him, as he persisted in desiring to see the monarch, promised him an audience on the following morning. La Guesle, in this instance, may be accused of having been little versed in the functions of his station, as he might have embarrassed the assassin by demanding on what day, and where he had had an audience with the first president, who was publicly known to be incarcerated in the Bastille; and what person had remitted the letter to his custody. Mathieu states, that while at supper, in the house of Guesle, this desperate wretch drew forth the knife destined to assassinate Henry the Third; and that some one having remarked, he had rather forgotten his breviary than his knife, Clement coldly made answer, "*Here is my Breviary, and this is my knife.*" Mezeray adds, that several persons, during the night, having repaired to the chamber in order to ascertain whether Clement reposed, they found him in a profound sleep, his breviary beside him, lying open at the article of Judith.

About eight in the morning, Clement was conducted to the monarch's study by La Guesle, attended by M. Clermont; when the murderer presented the letter, which the king perused; upon which, having inquired what he had to communicate on the part of the first president? approaching nearer to his majesty, as if with a

view of saying something in private, he drew the knife from his sleeve, and immediately plunged it in the monarch's stomach; who, feeling himself struck, cried out, "*Ah! unfortunate wretch, thou hast wounded me!*" He then drew forth the weapon and struck the murderer in the face, who immediately received several wounds from the hands of La Guesle and Clermont, when the body was cast out of the window. Had not the regicide been thus imprudently sacrificed, there is little doubt but many things might have been discovered which in consequence were never brought to light.

It was at first conceived that the wound would not prove dangerous, and such was the tenor of the despatch forwarded to all the governors of provinces by the monarch's command. Henry of Navarre, on learning the event, proceeded immediately to join the king; and on entering his apartment, threw himself on his knees at the bed's head, "*tears gushing from his eyes,*" says Cayet, "*his heart bursting with sobs; and seizing the monarch's hands, he kissed them, without having the power of utterance. The king then embracing the prince round the head, and having kissed him, pronounced his benediction.*" He called him his dear brother, his legitimate successor, and exhorted all the noblemen who surrounded him to acknowledge the king of Navarre as such after his death. At the conclusion of this affecting scene, the king fulfilled all the duties which the catholic faith require, and testifying the sin-

cerest piety; confessed himself, received the host, declared that he died reconciled with all his enemies, requested that no vengeance might be inflicted in consequence of his death, and then appeared so calm that the whole court indulged hopes of his recovery. The king of Navarre retired to his quarters; but at one in the morning, news was brought him that the king was dying; to whom he proceeded with all expedition, but the monarch had yielded up the ghost. Henry, being as yet ignorant of the circumstance, rushed precipitately through the apartments, when he suddenly heard several agonised voices exclaim, "*The king is dead!*" He then advanced with trembling steps; upon which the Scotch guards throwing themselves at his feet, according to Mathieu, exclaimed, "*Ah! sire, you are our king and master!*" He raised them, weeping bitterly, and proceeded onwards, entering the royal chamber, where he found all the nobility ranged motionless around the monarch's couch. Henry, bathed in tears, precipitated himself upon the body, which he embraced with fervour, and then rising, said, in half-choked accents: "*Floods of tears will not restore him; the real proofs of affection and fidelity are to avenge him: as for myself, if requisite, I will sacrifice my life to effect it. We are all Frenchmen; nothing distinguishes us when it is requisite to stand forth in the service of our king and our country.*" As the monarch concluded these words, Givry prostrated himself before Henry, saying, "*Sire, you*

will always prove monarch of the brave; you will only be abandoned by poltrons." After Givry, the two first catholic noblemen who recognised Henry as king of France, were marshal d'Aumont and Charles d'Humieres: the others reflected, and, after some deliberation, many of them retired from court. It was the above-named Givry to whom Henry subsequently wrote the following laconic billet: "*Thy conquests prevent me from sleeping. Adieu, Givry; it is thus all thy vanities are recompensed.*"

Henry the Third was only regretted by his magnanimous successor and favourites; he was generous, but never loved by his people. Although religious, the king did not acquire the esteem of his ecclesiastics, nor those who practised austerity; and he drew down upon himself the censures of the church. Possessing clemency and gentleness, he sullied his character and his life by the most atrocious vengeance; though not deficient in courage, he conducted himself in a cowardly manner; he dishonoured patience, one of the royal virtues, because it was unaccompanied by firmness; and he was ignorant of that which is, above all, dangerous to sovereigns, because he yielded and retracted; advancing forward some steps, and then retreating. Such may be deemed the whole history of this deplorable reign, and the uniform conduct of Henry the Third, the results of which have been plainly elucidated. From hence it is obvious, that amiable, endearing, and even heroic

qualifications are not sufficient to constitute a great monarch: there exist immutable principles which they never want with impunity: in short, there is *an art of reigning*, in order to command men, which it is necessary for crowned heads to study and practise; and without that profound acquirement, the happiest gifts showered upon them by nature are nothing more than useless benefits.

CHAPTER X.

Difficulties attending Henry's mounting the throne.—Sentiments of the nobility in regard to his succession.—Treaty entered into by Henry with the nobles of the realm.—The duke d'Epernon and other great personages quit the court.—Joust between Marivaut and Marolles.—Joy of the Parisians on ascertaining the death of Henry the Third.—Cardinal de Bourbon proclaimed king under the title of Charles the Tenth. — Propositions for peace made by Henry to the duke de Mayenne.—Henry's arrangements previous to the battle of Arques.—Signal victory obtained by Henry's forces at Arques.—Anecdotes of Crillon and the king.—Henry marches his army upon Paris, and takes possession of the suburbs.—Abandons the siege on account of a want of forces.—Various cities taken by the king, who is acknowledged by the republic of Venice.—Policy of the different European states.—Public opinions in the provinces of France.—Character of the duke de Mayenne.—Henry's narrow escape near Meulan, the siege of which place he raises.—Preparations for the battle of Ivry.—Equitable conduct of Henry.—Battle of Ivry.—Singular fate of baron Rosny after the conflict.—Affecting conduct of Henry to his friend Rosny.—Conference held at Noisy.—Death of cardinal de Bourbon.—Dissensions in the army of Henry.—The king lays siege to Paris.—Dreadful famine endured by the Parisians in consequence of the blockade.—Humanity of Henry the Great towards his enemies.—The duke de Mayenne gains succours from the prince of Parma, and Henry raises the siege from before Paris.

The death of Henry the Third, says Perefixe, completely changed the face of affairs. Paris,

the League, and the duke de Mayenne, from a state of extreme dejection became inebriated with joy; and the followers of the defunct monarch, from the hope of beholding their master speedily avenged, sunk into a state of apathy caused by excess of grief.

This prince, who had been the object of popular hatred, having ceased to exist, it might have been imagined that when in the grave such animosity would terminate, and consequently the fury of the leaguers diminish; whereas, on the contrary, not only all those constituting that faction, but even others who would have accounted it a crime to conspire against Henry the Third, their legitimate and catholic king, conceived themselves obliged in conscience to oppose the succession of Henry the Fourth, at least until he should have entered within the pale of the church; a condition they deemed indispensably necessary in order to succeed to the throne of Charlemagne and Saint Louis. On this account, if the League no longer entertained the sentiment which hatred inspired, it assumed a much more specious pretext,—an ardent zeal for the cause of religion; added to which, it adduced a very feasible plea,—that of continuing in arms until Henry should profess an adherence to the faith of his ancestors.

It was very difficult to determine whether this unfortunate regicidal deed portended good or evil to the cause of Henry the Fourth, since it appeared as if Providence had not drawn him from one extremity of the kingdom, where he

had continued banished in a certain measure, and conducted him by the hand to the most beautiful territory of France in the face of Paris, but to make known his goodness and his virtue, and place him in a condition to claim the succession, to which he would never have been summoned unless personally present. But, on the other hand, when we consider the multitudes of powerful enemies who were on the point of assailing him, the little money and forces he commanded, the weighty obstacle of his religious sentiments, combined with a thousand other difficulties, it certainly could not easily be ascertained if the crown had devolved to him that he might enjoy it, or whether it had fallen upon his head in order to destroy him : there was in consequence every reason to infer that if the actual state of things tended to his elevation, it was to seat him upon an unsteady throne, raised on the brink of a dreadful precipice.

While Henry the Third was at the point of death, the king of Navarre held several very tumultuous councils with those whom he esteemed his most faithful adherents. When the king was no more, he retired to his quarters at Meudon, where he adopted the royal mourning, which in France was of the violet colour. In the first instance he was followed by a respectable train of nobility, who attended him as much from curiosity as affection : the Huguenot party immediately tendered him the oath of fidelity ; but that number was very inconsequential. Some few of

the catholics, such as marshal d'Aumont, Givry, and Humieres, who, according to Le Grain, was one of the most learned, accomplished, and courageous noblemen of the court, swore with sincerity to continue faithful to him until death, without requiring any conditions at his hand. But the major part being either absent from inclination, piqued on account of some discontent, or conceiving that the period was then arrived when they might sell their services dearly, kept at a greater distance, and held small assemblies in various places, where they formed a number of ridiculous projects.

Among those who in the first instance proved adverse to the cause of Henry, were marshal Biron; Bellegarde, master of the horse; Francis d'O, superintendant of finances; Chateauvieux, and Dampierre; all of whom were soon brought over to his interests, and took the oath of allegiance: yet these supporters were of little weight when counterbalanced by the host of resolute opponents, and those who from various motives thought fit to withdraw from maintaining the interests of the prince. Speaking on this subject, Sully says, "It was no longer a question as to the success of a trifling negotiation, the gaining a victory, nor a small kingdom such as Navarre, which was the point in dispute, but the finest monarchy in Europe; yet how many were its obstacles it was requisite to conquer for the attainment, and what labours were to be overcome for

its procurement! How was it possible to subdue such a powerful party, so well established in popular opinion that it had made a king tremble who was firmly established on his throne, and almost reduced him to the necessity of abandoning his crown? This difficulty, already so great, became almost insurmountable when it was considered that the death of the king would disunite from the person of Henry the greater number and the principal part of his forces. He could neither depend on the princes of the blood nor the nobility; and such was his position, that standing in need of universal assistance, it was impossible to place reliance upon any one. Every royalist shuddered on calling to mind that news so surprising and unexpected would produce a revolution, that would leave the monarch with only a handful of his faithful adherents, at the mercy of his old inveterate enemies, and in the centre of a country where he was deprived of all the necessary resources."

This picture from the pen of Sully was too faithfully pourtrayed; but the genius, courage, activity, and prudence of Henry the Great triumphed over all these apparently insurmountable obstacles.

Many opinions were delivered in the councils; some alleging that the king ought not to confide his life and fortune to an army, the principal leaders of which were to be suspected on various accounts; those persons conceiving that he ought to withdraw with his own troops beyond the river

Loire, where the greatest number of his partisans was to be found. Chaumont de Guitri, one of his captains, thought that if the king retired beyond that stream which divides the kingdom, the leaguers themselves would not fail to state that he despaired of the success of his cause, and that such reports being industriously disseminated, would infallibly strike a deadly blow to his party. To this Rosny added, that the monarch ought to continue in the midst of the royal army, and there establish his rights; that such a resolution, though not without danger, was worthy the king and the character he had uniformly displayed; and this advice, which coincided with Henry's ideas, was in the end adopted.

Henry the Fourth having decided upon the mode of conduct that should be pursued, marshals Biron and D'Aumont, with Rosny and some other devoted friends, undertook to announce to the troops the death of Henry the Third, and engaged them to take the oath of fidelity to his successor. Upon this, says Perefixe, Sancy conducted the Swiss to the king, whose example operated upon the main body of the forces; when some princes and noblemen, ashamed at having hesitated, freely returned to their duty. The nobility held many assemblies, the result of the first being a supplication that Henry would recant the protestant persuasion; to which he replied, that no such conditions could be demanded, unless under perfect conviction; added to which, he delivered his opinions with so much gentleness and

dignity, combined with vigour and discretion, that although yielding nothing, without awakening their animosity he gave them to understand that he was ardently desirous of preserving their friendship; but that, in case it was impossible, he did not fear to lose it. In consequence of this a second assembly was convened, at which they contented themselves with exacting from Henry an oath that he would preserve the catholic religion in the kingdom, and take measures to instruct himself in the apostolic and Roman tenets. To this the monarch assented, and also promised to adhere to some other articles of less importance. Henry then caused a declaration of this species of treaty to be drawn out, which, after receiving the signatures of the nobility and gentry, he despatched to the parliament then sitting at Tours, in order to be verified by that body, consisting of such members as had retired from Paris on the escape of Henry the Third, after the day of the Barricadoes.

The stipulations of this treaty were to the following effect:—Henry promised, on the sacred word of a monarch, to maintain the catholic persuasion in his dominions; to confer no benefices or ecclesiastical dignities to any but catholics; to fulfil the promises frequently made of appealing on the article of religion to a general national council that should be convened, if possible, within six months; that no other faith should be publicly exercised in France but the Roman religion, except in those places which were in pos-

session of the Huguenots; that only catholic commanders should be nominated to govern cities and castles taken from the enemy; that all charges and dignities should be conferred on catholics, save and except the restrictions inserted in the treaty ratified during the preceding month of April, between Henry and the deceased monarch; that he would use his utmost endeavours to discover and punish those who had in any way contributed to the regicidal act committed on the person of that prince; and finally, that he would permit a deputation to be forwarded to the pope, in order to make his holiness acquainted with the motives which had induced the leading noblemen of the realm to acknowledge his majesty for their sovereign.

Many individuals very reluctantly signed this declaration; some positively refused acquiescence, and, among others, the duke d'Epernon; who had, however, other motives: haughty, overbearing, and imperious, he had abused the favour of the deceased monarch, from whom he obtained the best governments and the most important charges in the state. By these means he usurped immense riches, and offended the greatest men of the court; added to which, it was through his advice men of consummate talents had been dismissed from the service of their prince, who might have proved eminently beneficial to the country. He was not ignorant of being hated by the king of Navarre, to whom he had been so far deficient in respect as to kill with his own hand

one of his guards at the siege of Etampes, on a very frivolous pretext. The reason adduced by the duke d'Epernon for abandoning the court of Henry was the king's dislike to him, and a refusal to have his signature annexed previous to those of the French marshals, on the ratification of the treaty entered into with Henry the Fourth. During the last interview that took place between the king and this nobleman, the former thus addressed him: "Well, my lord duke, you have not thought fit to approve the document so freely signed by the major part of the distinguished leaders of my army, and who are equally as good catholics as yourself: do you not, then, recognize me for your king?"—To which the duke replied, "I am your very humble subject and servant; there is no one in your kingdom who more ardently desired to see you occupy the throne, in case of the demise of the king, my late master, than myself, who will never do any thing in opposition to your service, which I would rather die than contemplate for a moment: I nevertheless humbly supplicate your majesty to excuse me, if, being of a different religion, I feel it impossible in my conscience to continue near your royal person." In addition to the duke d'Epernon, Louis de L'Hôpital Vitry for some time espoused the interests of the duke de Mayenne; but previously surrendered up the government of Dourdan, which the deceased monarch had confided to his charge. Such was at that epoch the maxim with honourable men, who, du-

ring civil discords, on quitting one party, whatsoever it might be, at the same time surrendered up the places they had held by adhering to the same, restoring them to those from whom they originally procured their appointments. Some nobles imitated the conduct of the duke d'Epernon, and left the army under frivolous pretexts: the king, however, witnessed every thing with unshaken firmness, and seemed indifferent to these defections. Henry announced in public that he freely permitted all the discontented to retire, and that he preferred one hundred well-meaning Frenchmen to double the number whose amity might be suspected. He then proceeded to arrange the affairs of the kingdom; the governors of provinces, commanders of cities, the magistrates, and all such as required the consent of the new monarch to continue the exercise of their functions, were duly confirmed therein. According to the historian Mathieu, he wrote circulars to the parliaments and other tribunals; he convoked the states-general at Tours for the month of October, and at the same time issued all orders relative to the troops which he deemed to be necessary.

While the prince thus organised his affairs with wisdom and activity, the leaguers expressed their barbarous joy on ascertaining the death of Henry the Third; an event that was announced to the Parisians in a very singular manner, on the morning of the day when the deed was perpetrated. The king's army was encamped so near

to the walls of Paris, that some desperate soldiers of either party frequently presented themselves to exchange pistol-shots, or attack each other with the lance. During a truce entered into previous to the king's murder, John Marivaut, a royalist, advanced to demand whether any one was willing to break a lance with him in honour of the ladies: Claude de Marolles, one of the leaguers, accepted the defiance for the ensuing day, and appointed a plain behind the monastery of the Chartreux as the scene of action. Marivaut was a warrior highly renowned for valour, experience, and extraordinary corporeal strength. Marolles, inferior in age, had hitherto only signalized himself in tournaments and running at the ring. Marivaut, on the following day, being in despair on account of the fatal demise of Henry the Third, from whom he had received many services, and whose death he had witnessed at break of day, repaired to the spot appointed for the joust long before the period fixed upon; burning with a desire of avenging the assassination of his king on the person of one of his adversaries. Marolles sent him two lances, in order that he might make his choice of one; upon which Marivaut threw them both aside, exclaiming, "*Those are merely distaffs for women, and not lances fit for men at arms;*" adding, that he would make use of the weapon which he had acquired some days before from a Parisian whom he had slain. Marivaut was accompanied by Chatillon, whom he had chosen for godfather; while Ma-

rolles had Chartre by way of an umpire, bearing a lance equally as light as those with which he was accustomed to run at the ring. Having mounted their chargers, the combat began; Marivaut being actuated by impetuous fury, while Marolles defended himself with as much coolness as dexterity: the consequence was, Marivaut shivered his ponderous lance, and at the same time his adversary struck him a mortal blow, which unhorsed him at the moment; when the former, while expiring, cried, "*I am unfortunate in being vanquished, but happy in thus following the king my master.*" This exclamation making known the death of Henry the Third, of which the besieged were ignorant, was eagerly attended to and repeated by Marolles and Chartre, when the former, triumphantly re-entering Paris with trumpets sounding, announced to the people that Henry of Valois was no more. It is stated in history that the duchess of Montpensier, on learning the news, sprang from her seat, and, throwing her arms round the neck of the messenger, exclaimed, "*Ah! my friend, thou art truly welcome. But is it really a fact? is the wicked wretch, the perfidious monster, dead? My God, what satisfaction you give me! I am only pained at one thing; which is, that he did not know before he died I was the instrument who caused it.*" She then ordered her carriage, went out accompanied by her mother, and paraded along the streets of Paris, crying aloud to the populace, "*Good news!*" and exciting them to rejoice. Bonfires were illumined,

and the preachers uttered harangues in praise of James Clement, whom they denominated the *Holy Martyr*. The multitude proceeded in crowds to visit the mother of the regicide, a poor native of a village whom the duchess of Montpensier had invited to her hotel; the council of *The Union* settled a pension upon her, and the seditious orators of the *Sixteen* had the effrontery to apply to her, as they had previously done to the mother of the Guises, these words from Holy Writ, "*Happy is the womb that bore thee, and blessed are the paps that gave thee suck.*" Pope Sixtus the Fifth, in full consistory, extolled the sanguinary deed of the regicide; and in the course of his speech the pontiff went so far as to compare the act, for utility, to the incarnation and resurrection of our Saviour, and in an heroic point of view placed it upon a par with the conduct of Judith and Eleazar. This most disgraceful and iniquitous harangue was afterwards powerfully refuted in various writings that were published; which, however, combined much acrimony with their reasonings.

The duke de Mayenne was for some time undecided as to the mode of conduct necessary to adopt; but at length, however, resolved on proclaiming the old cardinal de Bourbon king under the title of Charles the Tenth, that ecclesiastic being detained prisoner by order of Henry the Third; the duke still reserving to himself the post of lieutenant-general of the kingdom.

Henry, says Perefixe, always wise and mode-

rate, made secret propositions to the duke de Mayenne for the purpose of bringing about an accommodation; but the latter, wrought upon by the dazzling promises of Spain, uniformly rejected his overtures. It appears that the inactive manners of the duke de Mayenne should have led him to listen with pleasure to the first overtures of a pacific nature: but such a character is uniformly inimical to a change of situation; it adheres to ancient habits and opinions from routine and uniform laziness. Henry would fain have persevered in carrying on the siege of Paris; but the vicinity of that capital had proved disastrous in the extreme to his army. Emissaries were incessantly despatched from thence to contaminate his followers, who uniformly resisted the allurements of money; whereas few were proof against the intrigues of the Parisian women, who artfully inveigled the gentlemen and officers to enter the city, when they spared no pains to engage and retain them in their service. Independent of this, Henry was aware that the duke de Nemours was advancing with troops to join the duke de Mayenne, and that the duke of Lorraine had equally engaged to furnish an army. The king was in consequence apprehensive lest the whole united forces might surround and cut off his retreat; and, instigated by these urgent motives, he determined on retiring from before Paris. Henry, however, prior to his departure, determined on making a last effort to bring Mayenne to terms if possible; and to accomplish this we

find the following statement in De Bury. Villeroy, secretary of state to the deceased king, had been grossly insulted by the duke d'Epernon, and shortly after disgraced. In consequence of this he had espoused the cause of the League, and joined the duke of Mayenne, who particularly confided in him, as well as the president Jeannin, both those persons well deserving of such consideration. The latter, in particular, was one of the wisest men of his age, and solely indebted to his own abilities for his elevation. He first acquired the post of advocate to the parliament of Dijon; when a rich citizen, one day hearing him plead, was so charmed with his eloquence, that he gave him his daughter in marriage; and it was owing to the prudence of Jeannin that a similar massacre to that of Saint Bartholomew was not perpetrated at Dijon. The king nominated him to the post of counsellor to the parliament; and after Mayenne became reconciled to Henry the Fourth, the monarch gave Jeannin to understand that he wished him to become one of his counsellors, when the latter remarked, that it was by no means just his majesty should prefer an old *leaguer* to so many illustrious personages, whose conduct could admit of no suspicion; to this Henry replied, that the man who had proved himself so faithful to a duke would never be deficient in fidelity to a king.

Henry having been given to understand that a servant of Villeroy, named Bigot, was in his

camp under pretext of some private business, was desirous of seeing him; and, during the interview, informed him that he should be glad to have a conference with his master, offering a pass for that purpose to the wood of Boulogne, or any other spot he should think fit to appoint. Villeroy, on learning this from Bigot, would undertake nothing without the consent of the duke de Mayenne, who objected to the interview, apprehending that it might displease the leaders of his party. Bigot, however, made known to the king, that if he would send a gentleman to Paris, his propositions would be heard. Marsiliere, secretary of the cabinet, was in consequence despatched, who, not succeeding in procuring an interview with the duke de Mayenne, waited upon Villeroy, and represented that the object of the duke's hatred being removed, he had no plea for continuing the war against a prince who had neither advised nor approved the murder of his brothers; that the king, who was aware of his merit and amiable qualities, esteemed and cherished him as a relation, and was desirous of employing his talents for the welfare of the state; that he would load him with honours and glory, and make him the leader of his councils; finally, exhorting him to seek advancement through the medium of his duty, and the friendship of his sovereign, rather than by means of troubles and public misery, which would terminate in the ruin of himself and his family. This prophecy, which was ultimately accomplish-

ed, should have biassed the duke; but either from an unlimited confidence in the power of the League, a contempt for Henry's resources, or dazzled by the authority confided to him, and the promises of Spain, Mayenne returned this answer through the medium of Villeroy;—"That he honoured the person of the king, and was aware of his worth and prudence; that he had every confidence in his word; but that the difference in their religions precluded the possibility of treating with him; that he had engaged his faith to the public cause; had sworn to obey Charles the Tenth, to whom the crown belonged; and that he could hear of no propositions until the cardinal de Bourbon should be set at liberty, and the king restored to the catholic faith."

Henry, on receiving this answer, which was communicated to him by Marsiliere on the 8th of August, wisely conceived, says Perefixe, that the interment of the remains of Henry the Third would afford him a very feasible pretext for abandoning the siege of Paris. In order, therefore, that the corpse might not be exposed to the resentment of the leaguers and the duke of Guise, he caused it to be transported to Compiegne, where it was deposited in the abbey church of Saint Cornille, where every funeral rite was performed which the confusion of those times would permit. Not being able to assist in person, owing to his religion, Henry committed the charge to Bellegarde and Epernon; the latter of whom escorted the body as far as

Compiegne, and then retired to Augoumois, while Henry repaired to Normandy.

The duke de Montpensier, governor of that province, there joined the monarch with two hundred gentlemen and fifteen hundred infantry. Rolet, who commanded Pont de l'Arche, presented him with the keys of that town, requiring no other recompense but the honour of serving him; while Emar de Chattes, a knight of Malta, followed his example in respect to the town of Dieppe.

Henry now ascertained, says Sully, that the duke de Mayenne, at the head of twenty-five thousand foot and eight thousand horse, sought to give him battle, while the army of the king did not amount to more than three thousand men. Indeed, so destitute appeared the monarch's situation, that he is said to have remarked to marshal Biron prior to the conflict at Arques,— "*That he was a king without kingdom, a husband without a wife, and a warrior without money.*"

The plan of the duke had been to force him into Dieppe, and then invest that place; and so certain was he of effecting this operation, that he had already spread a report, and written to various foreign princes, that he held the king of Navarre blocked up in a corner, from whence he could not escape without surrendering himself up, or jumping into the sea. So pressing seemed the emergency, even to the faithful servants of the king, that he was advised to embark as speedily as possible, and seek refuge in Eng-

land. "*While I still continue at the head of so many French warriors,*" replied the hero, "*advising me to fly is offering counsel which it is impossible for me to follow.*" Henry then took a position at the village of Arques, situated one league and a half from Dieppe, having determined not to shut himself up in that town in order to be besieged, nor march to the encounter of the enemy in open country with such an inadequate force. Henry, thus circumstanced, determined to intrench himself in a very advantageous position, calculating that the accustomed slowness of the duke de Mayenne, would afford him sufficient time to complete the fortification of his encampment. Arques is situated at the bottom of a hill, upon which stands its castle; the small river Bethune running through the place, to the right of which a deep rivulet empties itself, after having traversed the hamlet of Martin-Eglise, a quarter of a mile from Arques. On turning to the right, is another eminence, the summit of which was so thickly covered with underwood, that neither the cavalry, nor even the foot soldiers could pass without being put into great disorder. At an equal distance between Arques and Martin-Eglise, was a chapel, where Henry caused an intrenchment to be raised, the fosse of which was only ten paces wide and eight deep; and upon the platform he planted some pieces of cannon. Between the chapel and Arques, a level plain extends itself for about six hundred feet, bordered by a causeway, conducting from

the village to the route of Neuchatel; and adjoining the same, is a large extent of marshy ground. In this plain Henry encamped himself, having the village of Arques and the river Bethune to his left; behind him the causeway; while his right was supported by the hill, covered with underwood. At the base of this eminence he raised another intrenchment, fortifying the same with two bastions and eight pieces of artillery; the cannon of the castle of Arques equally defending the intrenchment and the avenues to the camp.

The king was fully aware that he might be taxed with temerity for thus undertaking to resist an army composed of thirty thousand troops, with three thousand six hundred men; but, independent of his not being able to find a more favourable position for his inadequate forces, he conceived that the weakness of his power required in the onset, and in the face of a new opponent, some deed of astonishing note; but with an intelligence truly wonderful he did not omit a single point which could in any way compensate for the deficiency in numbers. He marched twelve hundred Swiss to the borders of the grand route, posted six hundred infantry for the defence of the upper trenches, and stationed from one thousand to twelve hundred in the chapel. The cavalry he divided into two bodies, consisting only of three hundred each, with one-half of which he took a station between the wood and the road, ordering the other, divided

into platoons, to post themselves between the high road and the marshy ground, for the purpose of filling up the interval as well as possible. During the night Henry enjoyed no rest, fearful lest the enemy should take advantage of that period to gain possession of the causeway; in order to prevent which, if the attempt should be made, he mounted guard in person. In the morning he partook of refreshment in a deep fosse, whither he summoned his principal officers to share with him the repast, which was scarcely concluded ere it was announced that the army of the League was marching towards his encampment in order for battle. On gaining this intelligence, Henry directed the viscount de Chartres, Palcheux, Brasseuse, Avantigny, with three or four others, to enter the wood, who speedily after returned, having captured count Belin, sub-governor of Paris for the duke de Mayenne. The king went forward to meet him, and with a smile cordially embraced him; upon which the count looking round to behold an army, and seeing scarcely any forces, stood petrified with astonishment, and at length could not refrain from giving vent in words to the surprise he felt on beholding so few armed men around the person of the monarch. "*You cannot see them all*," said the prince gaily, "*for you do not calculate the omnipotent and the just cause wherewith I am assisted.*"

Though all the individuals who then surrounded the king had so frequently before witnessed his intrepidity in the midst of the most imminent

dangers, they could not, says Sully, sufficiently express their admiration on contemplating the serene tranquillity of his countenance, in a situation so much the more embarrassing, as it afforded him leisure to reflect on the exigencies whereby he was environed: the features of the monarch at the same time displayed *an air of sang-froid, and a courage mingled with wisdom, which appeared to the soldiers as if tinctured with something superhuman, and inspired them in turn with all the undaunted intrepidity of their noble leader.*

The duke de Mayenne, according to Henry's previous calculation, directed his first attack against the upper trenches, which was attempted by a squadron of lansquenets, who had recourse to a shameful artifice which was productive of success. These troops feigned unwillingness to fight, being opposed to troops similar to themselves: they even so far dissembled as to lower their pikes in proof that they surrendered; the royalists in consequence became so much the dupes of this dastardly treachery, that they permitted the enemies to advance and gain the trenches; from whence the latter instantly drove out the troops of the king, and took possession of this most advantageous post. At the onset Henry's forces were compelled to give way, and retreated to the chapel, which was attacked and taken; but they speedily rallied, and then recaptured the post which had been carried by the treacherous lansquenets, every one of whom was cut to pieces.

Le Grain states that Henry upon the above occasion exclaimed to Arrequer, colonel of the regiment of Soleure, "*My fine fellow, I am come to die or acquire honour at your side:*" and addressing himself to colonel Galati, he also said, "*My good father, keep a pike for me, because I am anxious to fight at the head of your battalion.*"

A sanguinary combat then began, which the resolute Swiss sustained with advantage, driving back five hundred horse into the marsh lands, where they continued to engage them for a considerable time. The royal forces at length began to feel the effects of exhaustion, for on their side the same troops were uniformly called upon to act, whereas the enemy presented new reinforcements, and increased in numbers at every fresh attack. In this dire emergency, Rosny was despatched from the main body of the troops to require a supply of men from the king, whom he found in no better situation: "*My friend,*" said Henry, "*you perceive it is out of my power to yield any assistance, but I will return with you myself.*" The prince then ordered Bellegarde to collect all the troops he could above the road, and proceeded at full speed into the midst of the troop that was in danger; where his presence proved more beneficial than a reinforcement; for, on beholding him, the little troop became reanimated, and, rallying all their corporeal energies, proceeded to combat anew with redoubled ardour. At this juncture the fog was so dense that it was impossible to distinguish any object at four paces

distance; on a sudden the mist disappeared, when the sun's rays, which displayed to the astonished enemy the small number of the royalists who dared make head against them, at the same time presented to the king's followers the residue of the army of Mayenne, which was bearing down to annihilate them. The duke's power was, in short, so near at hand that no royalist conceived he should be able to gain the causeway, which might serve as a last intrenchment: yet not one of these warriors, under the eyes of the king, entertained a thought of surrendering, as the only idea which then prevailed was to die nobly, by selling their lives as dearly as possible. The safety of Henry's party was solely due to this sudden dispersion of the fog and the prevailing rays of the sun; for the cannon of the castle of Arques which, during the battle, had proved of no utility, as the thickness of the mist prevented the possibility of directing the guns, now commenced a steady and tremendous fire, which produced such a terrible effect, that the enemy was completely paralyzed. Four vollies thus succeeded without intermission, so that the forces of the leaguers, completely pierced through by the cannon shots, could not support such a murderous and unexpected fire; and in consequence retired in disorder to the back of the valley. In vain did the officers exert themselves to restrain and rally them; there was neither discipline or unanimity between the chiefs, nor enthusiasm among their followers; so that this immense multitude disbanded, and, as it

were, disappeared from the field of action. What greatly contributed to discourage the forces of Mayenne, was the obstinate resistance they experienced from such an insignificant force, and the immense loss sustained in killed, it having been previously affirmed that Henry was reduced to such an abject state as to be wholly incapable of defending himself; in addition to which, the want of union in their chiefs proved another cause of this miraculous success.

The duke of Mayenne, says Anquetil, had recourse to every expedient which is the result of military science, in carrying on the dangerous attack at Arques; while the king displayed all the intrepidity necessary for the support of a difficult and arduous defence. Henry, pressed on all sides, was present every where; sometimes he was seen firm in his ranks, while at others he rushed forth at the head of his cavalry in pursuit of the enemy's routed squadrons. During this famous action the king found himself in the greatest possible danger. Hurried on by the ardour of combating, he became engaged between two numerous corps of cavalry, when, finding himself on the point of being hemmed in, he cried in a tone of desperation, "*What, then, shall I not find fifty gentlemen in all France, who possess sufficient resolution to expire with their king?*" —"*Courage, sire,*" answered Chatillon, "*here we are ready to yield up our lives with you;*" when he instantly charged the enemy's squadrons, and rescued the monarch.

The king, after the battle, which acquired him immortal glory, retired to Arques, and from thence to Dieppe; still harassed by the enemy, yet in all those skirmishes having uniformly the advantage. Henry, on witnessing the effect of all the attacks, remarked to his officers on the night of the combat: "*If the duke de Mayenne does not proceed in a different manner, I feel certain of beating him always in open country.*" Pope Sixtus the Fifth had predicted that Bearnais would prove victorious, because he did not remain so long in bed as the duke of Mayenne indulged at table. The same pontiff, on hearing of the victory obtained at Arques, exclaimed, "*Super aspidem et basiliscam, ambulabis et conculcabis leonem et draconem.*" Meaning by the aspic, the duke de Mayenne: the basilisk, the duke of Savoy; by the lion, the king of Spain; while under the title of dragon, he meant Henry the Fourth.

It was after this memorable conflict that the king forwarded to Crillon the following laconic note, so well known to all Frenchmen: "*Go hang thyself, brave Crillon; we conquered at Arques, and thou wast not present. Adieu, brave Crillon, I love you through thick and through thin.*"

Having mentioned this gallant soldier, we cannot resist the opportunity of giving the following account from the Lives of the duke d'Epernon and De Thou.

Lewis Berton de Crillon, or Grillon, was equally famous for the singularity of his character and extraordinary intrepidity, from whence

he derived the name of *The Man without fear.* It is recorded, that when the duke of Guise and some young noblemen were at Marseilles, they were desirous of ascertaining whether any thing could excite dread in the mind of Crillon; and for this purpose the duke, by dawn of day, repaired to his chamber, stating all was lost; that there was no resource but in flight, to effect which he had caused two horses to be led to the gate, which awaited them. Crillon, who was still in bed, calmly demanded his accoutrements and arms, saying, that it was far preferable to die sword in hand than survive the loss of such a city. They then left the apartment, and on gaining the top of the staircase, Guise burst into a fit of laughter, when Crillon, seizing him by the wrist, and grasping him with firmness, exclaimed, "*Young man, never deem it a pastime to dive into the heart of a worthy man. In the name of Death I swear! hadst thou found me weak, I would have buried my dagger in thine heart!*"

Crillon repaired one day to the king's study to offer excuses for a fault that had been attributed to him, at which period several courtiers were present. Crillon, from excuses, proceeded to asseverations, and gradually flew into a violent passion. Upon this, the monarch commanded him to retire; but the former constantly returned to the door, when it was perceived that the king turned pale with rage, though he did not utter a syllable. At length, however, Crillon retired, when, as the attendants were extolling the pa-

tience of Henry: "*Nature,*" observed the monarch, "*originally created me choleric; but, since I have learned to know myself, I have uniformly kept watch over a passion which it is so dangerous to listen to. I know from experience, that it proves an evil counsellor, and I am extremely happy in having good witnesses of my moderation.*"

Henry, by his skill and valour, so ably disputed the ground with his adversary, that he thereby gained time for the landing of four thousand English and Scotch, who were expedited to his succour by Elizabeth of England; which reinforcement was soon after followed by a greater, headed by count de Soissons, Henry of Orleans, duke de Longueville, together with marshals D'Aumont and Biron. The king had designedly spread the news abroad, that all his reinforcements were arriving; wherefore, Mayenne, not daring to await the junction, disappeared with his army, and left Henry complete master of the country.

The populace of Paris were for a long period ignorant of this event, so disastrous to the interests of the League. Nor was Henry unacquainted with the ridiculous tales that were disseminated respecting him by the duke de Mayenne and his adherents, prior and subsequent to his leaving Paris to take the field, and the contempt that nobleman entertained respecting the royalist forces. The duke had equally written pompous communications to the provinces, stating the certainty of an approaching victory, all which

had come to the hands of the king. Mayenne, in short, flattered the minds of the people with the most rebellious hopes, by innumerable falsehoods; the Parisians being easily duped by specious and bold fabrications. In order that these tales might the better succeed, Mayenne remitted to the capital four or five standards, fraudulently obtained during the conflict at Arques, to which the duchess of Montpensier added a dozen, fabricated by her command, and which were paraded through the streets in triumph. The common ballad-venders cried about Paris the plan of Dieppe, with an account purporting that Henry was closely besieged by Mayenne, and blockaded at sea by the duke d'Aumale, who had defeated the English fleet; and that the Bearnais, such being the term the leaguers in derision applied to Henry, could not escape unless he had wings. Added to this, it was contrived that couriers should enter the city, stating the king was willing to surrender in case his life was spared; and that the duke would escort him back manacled, and in triumph, to the capital. These recitals were accompanied by so many apparently corroborating circumstances, that the Parisian ladies hired the windows in Saint Denis Street, where scaffoldings were also erected to behold the captive monarch pass in chains.

"I am aware," said Henry, "that the people of Paris are very desirous of beholding me, and I must give them that satisfaction; the only disagreeable point is, that the duke de Mayenne

will not accompany me, as he has promised, having fled into Picardy. His good friends at the capital will, no doubt, feel chagrined on beholding me without him; but they may perhaps do me the justice to believe that the fault is none of mine." Holding similar discourses, which his natural gaiety and recent successes inspired, the monarch prepared to visit the capital in a manner little expected.

The Parisians, therefore, were not convinced of their error until the appearance of the king himself, who, quitting Normandy, after putting all the places he possessed in a proper state of defence, marched for Paris, with his victorious army, then strongly reinforced. Henry traversed the Seine at Melun, arrived on the 31st of October, 1589, at Bagneux, a village one league from Paris, and stationed his troops at Issy, Vaugirard, Gentilly, and the other villages in the environs. The king had secret emissaries in the capital. Nicholas Potier de Blancmesnil, the president, who headed the party called *Politics*, consisting of those advocating the royal party, had given Henry assurances that he would cause a rising of the secret adherents of his majesty, while he besieged the suburbs, and that a gate should be given up to him. Mathieu and Cayet, the historians, affirm, that the king attacked the suburbs on the festival of All Saints, by the advice of a Florentine gentleman, named James Corbinelli, who communicated the intelligence in these three words, "*Come, come, come,*" writ-

ten on a strip of paper, enclosed in the tube of a quill, which the carrier conveyed in his mouth. The king forced the suburbs; when the Parisians flew to arms; but they were driven back into the city, which might, upon that occasion, have fallen into the hands of the royalists, had the cannon arrived to break open the gate at the period the king had appointed. Henry continued master of the suburbs, behaving after his victory with the greatest moderation; prohibiting every species of violence and profanation of the churches, and proceeding in all directions to prevent and stop such conduct; he impeded the vengeful ire of Francis de Coligny, lord of Chatillon, whose intention it was to have sacrificed all the Parisians he encountered, as a just retaliation for the murder of his father, admiral Coligny.

This nobleman, who equally enjoyed the title of admiral of Guyenne, died in 1591, at his castle of Louve, aged thirty; a loss severely felt by the Calvinists, as it was supposed he would even have surpassed his father as a great warrior. He left a son, named Henry, count de Coligny, who was killed in the flower of his youth, in 1601, at the siege of Ostend. The king, on learning his death, stated in his praise, that he possessed so many great qualities that he knew no man of his age whose virtues indicated such flattering prospects of what he would have proved in future.

Two hours after the king's arrival, every thing

proved tranquil as in time of peace; the ceremonies adopted upon All Saints day were not interrupted in the churches, where the catholic royalists peaceably assisted with the citizens. The populace on this occasion gave evident proofs of their submission to the opinions of those who govern, and even of supporting them with fury without partaking of their sentiments; for the inhabitants, independent of manifesting no hatred towards Henry, gave him the most unequivocal proofs of admiration and love. When the king appeared in the streets, all the windows were thrown open, the inmates presenting themselves to applaud him; the populace also flocked in crowds, placing themselves against the houses to see him pass, and saluting him with reiterated cries of "*Long live the king!*" which were increased owing to the noble condescension of that great prince, and an air of gentleness and majesty that was diffused upon his person. The duke de Mayenne having ascertained, with astonishment, that the king was proceeding in the direction of the capital, marched thither with all the celerity possible; the army being preceded by a body of cavalry, under the command of the duke de Nemours, who entered Paris on the the night of All Saints day, and Mayenne on the ensuing morning. While the population of the suburbs made the air resound with cries of "*Long live the king!*" the inhabitants within the walls, from motives of fear, shouted "*Long live the duke de Mayenne!*" These vociferations

were mutually heard; when, doubtless, the discordance of those acclamations in no wise astonished the leaders of either party, for such contrasts can only create wonder in those who have not studied men during the periods of revolutionary storms, whereas monarchs will never be deceived by similar noisy demonstrations. A tyrant, on judging himself, despises them, but a paternal king becomes sensibly touched: he finds, says De Thou, in his conduct and his heart, the certain guarantees of their sincerity. The citizens of Paris ranged tables in the streets, covered with meats and wine, for the troops of Mayenne; and they welcomed them to their houses with open arms. The duke would not have arrived so expeditiously, had the king's advice been followed; he having commanded Montmorency Thoré to break down the bridge of Saint Maixant. Thoré, however, was suddenly taken ill; the order was not executed, and Mayenne consequently advanced without any opposition.

It is stated by Anquetil, that after the duke's arrival in Paris, Jeannin, who had previously shown himself favourable to the Spaniards, perceiving that, by way of compensation for their advances, Philip exacted the best cities of France that might be serviceable to his views, advised Mayenne to treat with the king; and Villeroi, though stating himself attached to the League from conscience, was of the same opinion. The duchess of Montpensier, on the contrary, sup-

plicated her brother to risk every thing, and assume the title of king: "You already possess all the authority," said that bold and factious woman; "and do not doubt but the catholic lords will more willingly fight for a monarch than a lieutenant-general, the post you now fill. Giving the crown to cardinal de Bourbon is an acknowledgment that it belongs to his family; and in case the old and infirm king should chance to die, who will then occupy his place?" Notwithstanding these representations, the duke persisted in his original resolution of placing on the empty throne a captive king; by which means he enjoyed all the royal authority.

The king was not in a situation to continue the siege of Paris; but, satisfied with having undeceived the inhabitants respecting his pretended overthrow, and compelled the duke de Mayenne to abandon Picardy, he withdrew his troops from the suburbs, and continued the whole of the ensuing day in order for battle in sight of all Paris, from eight in the morning until mid-day, uttering defiance to the duke de Mayenne, with a view of forcing him to march out: the duke, however, did not dare quit the walls of the capital. Henry retired without being molested in his retreat, and encamped at Linas, near Montlheri; where he remained a whole day, and then continued his march towards the Loire. Henry then took various towns from the League; among others, Etampes and Janville, in Beauce; the latter being of some importance on account of its castle, and

cutting off all communication between Paris and Orleans. After these exploits the prince attacked the city and castle of Vendôme, commencing with the latter, in which the cannon-balls made a breach; when Chatillon and baron de Biron, son of the marshal, at the head of a party of infantry, forced the place sword in hand. The surrender of the fortress was soon followed by that of the town, which was given up to pillage, having opposed a vigorous resistance to a monarch whom it should have been the first to acknowledge, as that place constituted a part of the patrimony of his ancestors. Henry spared the lives of the inhabitants, and the troops, with the exception of the governor Benechard, who had surrendered up that city to the League, of which Henry, then only king of Navarre, had confided to him the government; a want of fidelity of which there were few parallels at that period. From thence the monarch proceeded to lay siege to the city of Château du Loir; and while the army was there occupied, he mounted on horse-back with fifty gentlemen, proceeding with all expedition to Tours, where he arrived and was escorted by torchlight amidst the acclamations of the populace, who followed him in crowds to his hotel. On the following day the cardinals de Vendôme and de Lenoncourt presented themselves to offer their homage, and felicitate the king upon his victories; who were followed by the parliament in a body, the chamber of accompts, the court of aids, and the other eccle-

siastical and civil authorities. It was during Henry's stay at Tours that John Macenigo, ambassador from Venice, came to announce that his republic recognised Henry the Fourth as king of France; that he had received orders to compliment his majesty on his accession to the throne, and to continue under his government in the capacity of ambassador from the Venetian states. This minister was welcomed by the monarch with all the distinction due to the representative of the first power that had solemnly recognised his rights. Henry continued but a few days at Tours, and then rejoined his army, which he had left encamped at Château du Loir; and that town surrendered upon his arrival. The rest of the year proved nothing but a regular series of victories, which were the rewards of his courage, prudence, and moderation. He took in succession, and in a short period of time, Alençon, Mans, Château Briant, Sablé, Château Gontier, Mayenne, Laval, Argenteau, Falaise, Lisieux, Bayeux, Pont Audemer, Pont l'Evêque, Honfleur, le Havre de Grace, and Domfront. Some of these cities freely surrendered to the king and acknowledged him as sovereign, while the others were unable to resist the vigour with which they were attacked.

Amidst the wonder created by his indefatigable activity, and the terror inspired by his invincible arms, the wise plans he adopted acquired him every day new partisans: his troops observed the strictest discipline; and even when he was under the necessity of tolerating plunder, that of

churches was severely interdicted; nor was the order ever infringed, or any profanation offered to the images or relics of saints: he treated the ecclesiastics with all due respect, preserved their privileges, and did not permit the most trifling innovation on the subject of religion.

If Henry had not stood in need of money, he would have conquered his whole kingdom in a few months; but the moderate contributions which he uniformly levied upon the cities that were reduced by force, together with the loans and sums collected from imposts, were not sufficient for the maintenance of his troops in a collective body; and he was consequently under the necessity of carrying on the war in a very singular manner, which could not have been advantageous to any one but himself. When the forces had continued some months, and consumed independent of their pay, all that they could procure for their subsistence in the districts they occupied, the king sent them back to their native countries, not only to reinstate themselves, but to become the preservers of those territories from the incursions of the leaguers. The king equally adopted this plan with respect to the gentlemen serving in his army: who, moreover, on returning to their estates, were solely occupied in amassing money from their own revenues, to convey it to the monarch, and employ such proceeds in his service; nearly all, in pressing emergencies, raised money upon their domains, and sold their timber to supply the exigencies of the army.

All these warriors, on receiving leave of absence from the king for a certain number of months, never failed to return at the period prescribed; and if the monarch thought fit to recall them previous to the stipulated term, they repaired to his standard with a zeal and eagerness that was never found deficient. When the captains surrounded the monarch's person, they imitated the conduct of their august leader, in denying to themselves every superfluity in clothing and equipages: the king's example, which was displayed in sobriety, disinterestedness, and contempt for all luxury or pageant, constituted the principal force of that belligerent court. But this fidelity, respect, and enthusiastic love for Henry did not prevent internal divisions, excited by those jealousies and natural animosities that existed between the catholics and the reformers of the royal army; and never could Henry have appeased and remedied the inconveniences which were the constant results, had there not been in his character and mind an admirable mixture of equity, patience, firmness, conduct, and generosity.

Henry, after all these victories, found himself compelled to disband the major part of his forces; when each returned to his respective country, while the king usefully employed this forced repose. He regulated all his civil and political affairs; which did not, however, prevent him from dedicating much of his time to reading and other pursuits unconnected with public affairs. Fully

aware that Rosny carefully made notes of all the events he witnessed, Henry directed him to revise his labour, and put the materials in order; upon which Rosny, wishing to excuse himself under the plea of his being unaccustomed to write, the monarch promised to peruse the manuscript, *and correct the style with his own hand;* such having been the commencement of the *Mémoires de Sully;* an interesting fact, that renders those volumes the more precious.

While the brave warriors of Henry the Great enjoyed a short period of repose in the bosoms of their families, we will seize that period of inactivity to explain the state and political dispositions of the provinces and foreign states, at the epoch of which we are speaking.

Pope Sixtus the Fifth, one of the greatest pontiffs that ever existed, was too enlightened not to have discovered the ambition and real motives of the chiefs of the League; but the interest of religion certainly led him to decide, that a catholic prince ought of necessity to occupy the throne of France; and he in consequence supported that coalition. As a sovereign prince, he had, conjointly with all the other powers, the right of choosing, from among the pretenders to the French crown, that prince whom motives of policy engaged him to recognise. Thus, in giving his sanction to the old cardinal de Bourbon, he only followed the conduct of various potentates; namely, the king of Spain, the duke of Savoy, the duke of Lorraine, &c. Sixtus, however, did

not publicly acknowledge him, conducting himself without either passion or animosity. He was no advocate for the League, consisting of a great number of ambitious intriguers and some silly fanatics; for religious fanaticism is merely the result of the most stupid ignorance. Henry the Fourth was admired by the pontiff, who did not disguise his sentiments. Upon the assassination of Henry the Third, the false reports despatched by the League had, for a time, led him to believe that the cause of Henry the Fourth was irretrievably lost, and that the whole of France was anxious to acknowledge cardinal de Bourbon as king. Sixtus, in consequence, appeared to decide in favour of that prince; but when made acquainted with the real state of affairs, he sent cardinal Gaetan into France, to whom he gave the title of Legate. Sixtus caused him to be accompanied, says Anquetil in his Spirit of the League, "by several persons distinguished for their conduct and prudence; and among others was the jesuit Bellarmin, so famous as a controversialist. The brief given by the pope expressly stated, that he only forwarded his legate to unite all the French under the Roman catholic religion, and to contribute in electing a king of that persuasion, without making mention of cardinal de Bourbon. He recommended cardinal Gaetan not to declare himself inimical to the king of Navarre so long as there should remain a hope of bringing him back to the Romish faith; to remain neuter as regarded

all the temporal pretensions of the princes; to think only of the interests of religion; to except no person whatsoever; and to give his consent to every thing, provided the king to be elected was a Frenchman by birth, obedient to the Romish church, and agreeable to the kingdom."

These directions, if well executed, might have established peace in France; but the faulty conduct of the legate, who did not abide by the instructions given him, perpetuated and increased the troubles. Gaetan, far from remaining neuter, manifested the most odious partiality for the League and the Spaniards; he had been deputed with a pacific mission, and he only played the part of an intriguer and an abettor of dissensions.

Gaetan, bred up in all the principles of a domineering churchman, conceived that every thing in France would bend to his authority, and that his will alone would suffice to nominate a king. He was, however, cruelly undeceived during his journey through that kingdom; for his overbearing haughtiness called forth harsh replies, bravadoes, and affronts from the catholics, whom he pretended to command in too despotic a manner. The king had made known, that in case the legate visited his court he would be welcomed with honour and distinction; but, on the contrary, if he repaired to the rebels, he should not be regarded as legate, but an enemy. The orders of Henry were strictly attended to; and in consequence, parties were despatched upon the grand route, who beat and dispersed

the escort sent to conduct Gaetan to Paris; when the latter, instead of traversing the French territory like a conqueror, thus found himself reduced to the extremity of proceeding to the capital as a fugitive.

The Parisians, however, did all in their power to compensate for these insults. The archbishop's palace was decorated with the royal furniture, and he was received like a crowned head.

The king of Spain, says Sully, was only a false partisan of the duke de Mayenne and the League, whose real intention merely was to prolong the troubles in France, in order to invade some of the provinces: and on this account, add Perefixe, Mezeray, and De Thou, that monarch during the civil commotions only afforded Mayenne sufficient succours to feed the flame of discord, and prevent it from being smothered.

The duke of Savoy, in like manner, acted solely from personal motives, having but one object in view, namely, to appropriate to himself some wrecks of devastated France; for, having already appropriated to himself the marquisate of Saluces, he entertained hopes of adding Languedoc and Provence; but Lesdiguieres put a stop to these princely spoliations.

The emperor interfered but little in the troubles of France: however, in many instances it became manifest, that such moderation was only the result of the distance that separated his states from those of France, and that he was in reality faithful to the plan pursued by the house of

Austria, which consisted in profiting by every occasion to promote its own aggrandizement at the expense of the other powers of Europe. Elizabeth of England, sworn enemy of the Spanish monarch, was united to Henry the Fourth from interests common to both, as well as by inclination. Her penetrating genius foresaw the high destinies of the hero, whose conduct and character she well knew how to appreciate. From Elizabeth Henry received supplies of men and money; and she united with him in support of the revolters in the United Provinces, in order that Philip the Second should be less capacitated to yield assistance to the League.

With respect to the Italian princes, the dukes of Florence and Mantua, they united with the Venetians in support of Henry the Fourth. Venice forwarded him considerable sums; and the duke of Florence had also the liberality to advance three hundred thousand francs to Henry at a period when he was in very great distress.

The sentiments of the French provinces were even more diversified in regard to the king than those of the foreign powers. Part of the clergy advocated the cause of the League; nearly all the first nobility had declared for the king; while the people in the cities and throughout the country followed the impulse given them by the magistrates and governors. Of the eight parliaments that existed in the kingdom, not one had altogether declared for his majesty. One half of that of Paris,—which, faithful to the monarch,

had retired to Tours, as previously stated,—distributed justice, and annulled the edicts published by the rebellious moiety, which held its sittings in the capital; among whom, however, some royalists remained, who had not been able to effect their escape, and secretly served the king, though unable to espouse his cause openly. Others, who, possessing uprightness and probity, had engaged in the League, repented in their souls, and only awaited a favourable opportunity to return to their duty; among which number may be enumerated Brissac, Villeroy, and the sage president Jeannin; for, during the reign of faction, a flagrant error may accompany a great fund of wisdom.

The duke de Mercœur, brother of queen Louisa, widow of Henry the Third, was master of the major part of Brittany; Normandy and Picardy were divided between the royal party and that of the League; the principal towns of Champagne, with the exception of Langres and Chalons, were in the power of the rebels; the whole of Burgundy was at the disposal of the duke de Mayenne; in Maine and Berri the troops fought with equal advantage on either side; and Auvergne was governed by count de Randan, in behalf of the League. Limoges and Limousin had declared for the king; and Matignon, if he did not govern Bordeaux and Guyenne in behalf of the monarch, at least maintained them in a state of pacific neutrality.

Provence was particularly agitated; the greater part of the nobility having abandoned the rightful

cause, which nevertheless preserved many partisans, while the war was carried on with the greatest animosity.

Dauphiny was no less a prey to commotions, being torn by three factions: the Huguenots, under the command of Lesdiguieres; the royalist catholics, headed by Ornano; and the leaguers, who had for chief Obligny. The two former united in behalf of the king, and ultimately preserved the province, by expelling the rebels and preventing the duke of Savoy from molesting that territory.

Such was the state of France and the major part of Europe at the commencement of 1590. This faithful picture conveys a more forcible idea of the heroic qualities and talents of Henry the Great, than all the panegyrics that might be written upon that monarch; who was enabled to triumph over so many obstacles, intrigues, animosities, and such persevering obstinacy; that prince who, with arms in his hand, dispensed around, even while combating, the seeds of benevolence, concord, and love; and who, when conquering successively the different provinces, acquired at the same time an empire over the hearts of all.

The duke de Mayenne, who fomented against his legitimate sovereign so many difficulties and disagreeables, was in a much more perilous situation, because he was not repaid by glory for the disquietudes that tormented his life, while the reproaches of his conscience must have augment-

ed the chagrin occasioned by his reverses, and embittered his transient successes. He possessed talents for war; his idleness was merely physical: his mind was neither deficient in activity or extent; though less brilliant than that of his brother the last duke of Guise, it was far more solid. He possessed all the prudence requisite for great catastrophes; and he had neither the audacity nor the enthusiasm which uniformly subjugate the public, and frequently decide the fate of events. Though entertaining the gigantic project of ascending the throne, his ambition was by no means of an exalted nature; he manifested a predilection for calculating, and the most unshaken *sang-froid* in enterprises of an extraordinary nature, which he merely followed up as chances that were possible, and therefore to be attempted, at the same time preparing great resources in case those brilliant expectations should be unattended by success. Never before were such vast ideas conceived by a genius possessing so little ardour; nor were such complicated intrigues ever conducted with the same calmness and dexterity. He adroitly eluded the proposals of the Spanish agents, whose wish it was that their monarch might be named protector of France, giving for answer that the pope would feel offended if any other than the vicar of Christ should assume a title, which, in such case, would really be that of protector of the catholic religion: the consequence was, that Spain did not dare insist. It is also said that the duke

found means to unite with the *Sixteen* persons devoted to the house of Guise, which association was entitled the Council of *Forty;* but men who are associated in a body very rarely preserve those principles which actuated them previous to their alliance. Mayenne, in consequence, did not find in the *Forty* that docility upon which he had calculated; and aware that he was not master of their deliberations, he boldly broke up the council; having recourse, however, to his accustomed prudence when displaying this act of authority. For this purpose he selected the moment when, upon the eve of setting forward upon an expedition, Paris was full of troops. He convened the *Forty;* informed them that cardinal de Bourbon being king, and himself lieutenant-general of the kingdom, he felt himself bowed down by the weight of affairs; that on quitting Paris to take the command of the army, he was desirous that his council should accompany him; and that by the royal authority confided to his charge, he was going to nominate a more numerous body, and dismiss that of the *Forty,* which was no longer of any utility. This declaration proved a thunderclap to the council of *Sixteen;* but the duke had taken his measures with so much precaution that there was nothing left but submission, and Mayenne, in consequence, formed a new council.

The archbishop of Lyons, who obtained his ransom from the imprisonment to which he had been subjected by Henry the Third for fifteen thousand crowns, was appointed keeper of the

seals; the duke also named four secretaries of state, and, in short, became sole arbiter of the royal authority; when he proceeded to put himself in a posture for continuing the war. The army of the League marched in order to lay siege to Meulan; at which period the king was occupied in retaking several cities, and among the rest, Falaise. He summoned count de Brissac, who was the governor, to surrender that place; but Brissac, relying on the strength of the fortifications, replied that he had made an oath not to listen to any capitulation during six months. The king to this returned for answer, that he had taken an imprudent oath, that he undertook to absolve it, and would change the six months into that number of days.

This actually took place; for the discharges of artillery having undermined two towers, the soldiers mounted to the assault, the city was forced and sacked; when Brissac, who had shut himself up in the citadel, surrendered a prisoner.

After this exploit Henry proceeded to succour the town of Meulan, which from his position became a place of importance. He entered the forest, where, being anxious to reconnoitre the enemy's army, he ascended with Rosny and some other officers into the belfry of the church of Saint Nicaize; when having nearly attained the last steps, a bullet passed between his legs which battered the steps so much that the king and his companions were obliged to descend with the

help of a rope. Henry soon after compelled the enemy to raise the siege of the town.

The League was, however, consoled by a signal success which soon after crowned their efforts, in taking possession of the city of Rouen; while Henry was occupied with the siege of Dreux in the bishopric of Evreux. Scarcely, however, had he commenced operations when he learned that the duke de Mayenne, with a reinforcement of Spanish troops, was marching to the assistance of that place: the king in consequence abandoned Dreux, and immediately after summoning the principal officers of his army, he thus addressed them: "*My brave companions, it is requisite that we should blot out the disgrace of raising a siege by gaining a battle: with such courageous men as yourselves, I do not doubt but we shall obtain a signal and brilliant victory: it is unnecessary for me to say more; march on to the enemy!*" when the royal forces immediately proceeded to Nonancourt. At this town Henry arranged all the plan of the battle, which he laid before his officers, who found it so perfect that they unanimously agreed no alteration was requisite: it was merely noticed that in all the dispositions laid down no precautions were taken, should a retreat become necessary in case of any unfortunate result. "*No retreat,*" exclaimed the king, "*no retreat, but the field of battle!*" Henry then directed his officers to marshal their troops and cause them to advance in the order he had prescribed, that they might be ready to fight as soon as occasion

should present itself: he confided a copy of his plan to baron de Biron, who was to act in the capacity of marshal-general of the camp; and to Dominic de Vic, otherwise called captain Sared, he appointed the post of camp-master, charged with the duty of serjeant of the battle. The latter officer, though having a wooden leg, was not less active, and was acknowledged one of the bravest commanders in Henry's army.

The two forces encountered in the plains of Ivry, near Dreux; that of the king amounting to eight thousand infantry and two thousand cavalry. Towards the middle of the battle, however, he was joined by the duke de Humieres, accompanied by three hundred gentlemen: the ordnance consisted of four pieces of cannon and two culverins.

The army of the duke de Mayenne amounted to thirteen thousand foot and four thousand horse, having also four pieces of artillery.

The duke, fully aware of the bravery of the royalist troops, and the great resources that were found in Henry's genius, was not willing to risk the battle; but the reproaches of his generals and the Parisians, the pressing representations of the Spanish junta, the shame of having lost more than eighty towns in six months, at length urged him to determine on the conflict; at the same time taking every necessary step to ensure a retreat should ill-fortune await the termination of the struggle; and in particular, ordering every thing to be prepared to break down several

bridges across the Seine; which precaution, in reality, proved his preservation. Count d'Egmont, who commanded thirteen hundred Spanish lancers in the army of the League, greatly contributed in deciding Mayenne to risk this battle. Youthful, brave, and presumptuous, he supported his arguments with peculiar vehemence, and prevailed; which was, in his estimation, the same as gaining the victory, having prided himself that his squadron alone would suffice to defeat the royal army. On quitting the last council held upon this subject, D'Egmont exclaimed with transport, "*Battle, battle!*" and in one hour afterwards he passed the river d'Eure, over the bridge of Ivry, at the head of the Spaniards and the French.

This young count was the son of Lamoral d'Egmont, who was beheaded at Brussels with prince Horn. It is reported, that the person who harangued him on his arrival at Paris, having, in the course of his speech, pronounced some panegyrics on the memory of Lamoral, his father, the count interrupted him, saying, "Do not speak of him; he deserved death, for he was a rebel:" a remark the more misplaced, as the count was at that very juncture advocating the cause of rebellion against his lawful monarch.

On the 13th of March, 1590, the two armies were in presence of each other; but night coming on, the combat was postponed until the ensuing day. At an early hour in the morning, Henry issued his commands for the order of

battle; and he signalized the commencement of this portentous affair by an equitable and generous action. Colonel Thische, otherwise named Schomberg, who commanded the German troops, had, some days before, demanded the arrears of pay due to his men; which the king being unable to liquidate, made the following hasty reply: "*A man of courage never yet required money on the eve of a battle.*" This offensive remark came to Henry's mind at the moment previous to the conflict; when, approaching the German commander, in presence of the whole army, he expressed himself in the following terms, and in an elevated tone of voice: "*M. de Schomberg, I have offended you: this may perhaps prove the last day of my existence; I am unwilling that any imputation upon my part should attach itself to the honour of a gentleman: I well know your courage and worth, and I beg that you will pardon and embrace me.*"—"*Sire,*" answered Schomberg, "*it is true your majesty wounded me the other day; and at the present time you kill me, since the honour now conferred obliges me to die in your service upon the present occasion.*" This courageous officer too fatally performed his promise, being numbered with the slain, while valiantly fighting at the side of the king.

The trumpets had already sounded, and the din of arms commenced. Henry, mounted upon his war-charger, advanced at the head of the troops; when, clasping his hands, and elevating his eyes to Heaven, he uttered these ejacula-

tions: "*Lord, thou knowest my thoughts, and thou divest into the recesses of my heart. If it be for the advantage of my people that I should possess the crown, favour my cause, and protect my arms; but if I am doomed to be one of those monarchs whom thou dispensest in thine ire, take from me my life with my crown: let my death deliver France from the calamities of war, and may my blood be the last that is shed in this quarrel!*" As the king terminated these affecting words, one universal shout of "*Long live the king!*" rang throughout the army: when the prince, turning towards his troops, said: "*My friends, ye are Frenchmen, I am your king: yonder is the enemy; the more numerous, the greater will be our glory: if you this day labour for my fortune, I do the same for you. It is my desire to conquer or to die with ye: keep your ranks close; if the heat of battle should carry you away, call to mind the necessity of rallying—it is to gain the battle. It will take place between those three trees you behold yonder,* (they were three pear-trees;) *and if you miss your standards, do not lose sight of my white plume of feathers; you will always behold it waving in the path of honour.*" As the king concluded, he received his helmet, surmounted by three white feathers, and gave the signal for combat, taking the command of the right wing of the army, while the left was led on by marshal d'Aumont. The principal shock was between the cavalry forces; being on either side composed for the most part of private gentlemen. They continued for a length of time mingled to-

gether, so that it was impossible to ascertain which side had the advantage; and, during a short period, the troops conceived that the king had been killed or taken, while the enemy shouted aloud, "*Victory!*"

The supposition of Henry's death, says Mathieu, originated in the appearance of the marquis de Nesle, accoutred that day like the king; who, being environed by his enemies, received several wounds, of which he died.

The royalists, discouraged, began to waver, when, on a sudden, Henry made his appearance, and proceeding at full speed towards his dispirited soldiers, cried aloud, "*Turn your faces, in order that, if ye will not fight, ye may at least behold me die!*" This appeal, seconded by the king's majestic look, produced an instantaneous effect; the soldiers rallied, and followed their monarch with renewed ardour, who rushed into the thickest of the enemy's squadrons, crying out, "*We must now play the game of pistols:*" immediately after which he killed with his own hand the squire of count d'Egmont; that nobleman having led on his Spanish forces, and conducted a tremendous charge on the royal squadron without being able to make any impression; during which the young count was killed by a pistol-ball, discharged by one Fouslebon, which blew his head in pieces.

For some time all traces of the king were again lost, Henry having precipitated himself where danger threatened most; upon which oc-

casion he was environed by twelve or thirteen gentlemen of the adverse party. In this exigency he evinced a courage almost superhuman; no barrier could resist his quick and well-directed blows: and in this manner he kept his adversaries at bay until some of his own forces came up to his rescue. The leaguers then began to fall back, and speedily breaking their ranks, the rout became general; while Henry, during the dreadful carnage, was frequently heard to cry, "*Spare the French, but strike at the foreigners!*"

In the *Henriade* of Voltaire, he asserts, that the victory of Ivry was due to Henry's superiority of knowledge and personal intrepidity; but he allows at the same time that Mayenne performed all the duties of a great general: his only crime, says that writer, consisted in the cause he had undertaken to support.

One body of Swiss remained upon the field of battle, refusing to surrender; upon which marshal Biron ordered up the cannon; but Henry, recollecting the proofs of affection which that nation had shewn on his coming to the throne, wished to testify his gratitude by preserving the battalion; and in consequence despatched a trumpeter, offering them *good quarters*, which the Switzers accepted; who, having laid down their arms, consented to enter into his service. The king communicated this intelligence to Sillery, his ambassador in Switzerland, in order that he might announce it to the Cantons, who returned their thanks; and by that means, says

Perefixe, Henry also gained the affection of the five small catholic cantons.

The king went in pursuit of the fugitives, of whom as many were sacrificed as had been previously killed in the heat of battle; the victorious army driving the leaguers several miles before them, securing all the standards, and taking an immense number of prisoners. Henry during the whole of this rout was occupied in rescuing the French from the rage of the soldiery: he saved many from their hands in person, became himself their guard, and consoled the captured officers by the most soothing expressions. On the field of battle and among the enemy nothing reigned but terror and confusion; the prince resembled a kind father seeking his strayed children, and exposing himself in order to preserve them. It was thus Henry avenged himself for the massacre of Saint Bartholomew; and certainly no better method could have been adopted, as the heroism and philanthropy of his conduct aggravated the horrors of that appalling recollection.

Henry, afterwards visiting the field of battle, recognized among the slain the body of count d'Egmont covered with blood and dust, which excited in his breast sentiments of pity; when it was remarked to the king that such a death was too glorious for a nobleman who had wielded arms in favour of the assassins of the defunct monarch, his relation; and commanded Spaniards, the murderers of his own father, whose

memory he had dishonoured by a cowardly ambition. Henry then casting his eyes upon the scattered bodies of the Spanish troops, remarked to his companions, smiling, "*Well! methinks the king of Spain must now recognize me as monarch of France; for I have given him a good proof that I am such, by thus curing of the king's-evil so many of his subjects!*" Among the gentlemen slain in the king's army was Francis de Pas, one of his best officers, who fell before the monarch's eyes. The prince, afflicted on witnessing the fatal end of one whom he had long regarded as a brave and faithful adherent, cried out, "*Ventre saint-gris!*" (Henry's usual oath, which it is impossible to Anglicise,) "*I am truly afflicted: are there no more of the family?*" Upon which being informed that his widow was alive and pregnant, "*Well, then,*" cried the king, "*I hereby settle upon the burthen she bears, the pension formerly enjoyed by her gallant husband.*"

The duke of Mayenne fled by the road of Ivry, where he passed the Eure; the bridge of which place he immediately caused to be broken down, and then sought refuge at Mantes; where the inhabitants would not consent to admit him until he had assured them that the king was killed, and that the advantage had been equal on either side.

The victory was complete, the cannon, baggage, and all the stands of colours falling into the hands of the victors. Of the whole army, which, combined, amounted to about seventeen

thousand men, one quarter escaped; the residue being either killed or made prisoners. Henry only lost five hundred men; among whom the personages of note were Clermont d'Entrague, captain of his guards, killed at his side; Longouray, a gentleman of Normandy, aged seventy-two; De Crenay, cornet of the duke de Montpensier; and Feuquieres. All the officers upon this occasion displayed their accustomed valour: marshals Biron and d'Aumont particularly signalised themselves, and contributed to the fortunate termination of the combat; the former, not by presenting himself in every direction like the king, but giving necessary orders as occasion required; upon which account that nobleman, referring to Henry's conduct, said, "*Sire, you have this day performed the duty of marshal Biron, while marshal Biron has done that which it behoved the king to accomplish.*" This remonstrance, says Perefixe, was approved by all present; while the principal commanders took the liberty of supplicating his majesty that he would not again expose his person in a similar manner; to consider that the Almighty had not destined him to be a simple carabineer, but king of France; that every arm should be raised to combat in his defence; but that they would all become impotent if deprived of the head that set them in motion. It is not to be denied that the only reproach which could be made to the monarch was too great an exposure of his person at Ivry; but in such a situation this example, tending to make

every soldier a hero, was perhaps necessary. Henry being asked what name he would give to the battle? returned for answer, "*It is the battle of the Almighty, for to him alone is the glory due!*"

The darkness of night, and the impossibility of effecting a prompt passage across the river, owing to the bridges having been destroyed by order of Mayenne, prevented the king from following the duke, and obliged him to halt at the castle of Rosny, one league from Mantes. As his commanders arrived, the monarch rose, and advancing, embraced them, shaking their hands and causing them to take their seats at the table; and on receiving marshal d'Aumont, when inviting him to supper, he said, "*It is but just that you should partake of the feast, because you officiated so well at the nuptials.*"

We learn from Perefixe that the loss of the battle of Ivry produced such consternation in Paris, that had the king marched direct upon the capital, there is no doubt but he would have been received with little opposition. Some stated that marshal Biron prevented Henry from following this plan, fearful lest, after that, the king having no longer occasion for his services, he should be deprived of the royal favour. Others have conjectured that Henry's ministers and Huguenot captains dissuaded the monarch, apprehending that he might come to an accommodation with the Parisians on the subject of religion, and consequently advised him rather to starve the city out. This

opinion was forcibly supported by the superintendant d'O, that officer advocating the measure in order that Paris might be treated as a conquered place; when all the treasures would fall into their hands, and the rental of the *Hôtel de Ville* be suppressed, by reducing to a state of bankruptcy the wealthy body of the citizens in annihilating the debts of the late king, which were immense.

The king had thrown aside the sword used during the battle on his entrance into the apartment; and when he arose from the repast, it was presented to him. That terrible weapon, under which so many gallant warriors had fallen, was reeking with blood, and hacked like a saw; Henry turned away his eyes with an expression of horror, and shuddered on recollecting the dire excesses to which war subjects the minds of the most humane of mankind, and on the following day sent to offer terms of peace to his enemies; who were as yet far from willing to accept them on equitable conditions.

At the battle of Ivry many distinguished officers were wounded: baron de Biron, son of the marshal; the marquis de Presle; count de Choisy; the brothers d'O; Monslouet; La Vergne; count de Lude; and baron de Rosny. The latter, according to custom, was engaged in the royal squadron, and had two horses killed under him. After receiving some very serious wounds he fainted away, without being conscious of the result of the battle: and on reviv-

ing, found himself stretched upon the ground, without his helmet, and nearly stripped of his armour, the whole having been hewn in pieces; when, gazing around, he beheld near him neither attendants, enemies, nor troops, but dead bodies; so that he conceived the battle had been lost. The king was at this period in pursuit of the enemy's routed fugitives. Rosny arose, being scarcely able to support himself; and in this state beheld approaching him one of the enemy's horsemen, who, though wounded and badly mounted, appeared anxious to deprive him of life. Fortunately, Rosny chanced to be near a pear-tree, the branches of which hung very low; and thither he dragged his limbs; when, by turning round it, and forming a barrier of its branches, he avoided the blows of the soldier; but, after a few minutes, the sound of a horse approaching at full gallop being heard, he took to flight. The individual who thus timely made his appearance was a servant in the suite of the royal army, mounted on a wretched little horse; which Rosny, who uniformly provided himself with money on going into action, purchased at a price ten times more than its value. This man could give him no satisfactory intelligence respecting the fate of the day; when Rosny, still feeling a conviction that ill fortune had attended the arms of the king, mounted the animal, and began to proceed, unconscious of the route he ought to pursue, and continued to advance at a mere hazard; on a sudden, however, he descried seven

of the enemy making towards him, one of them bearing the white standard of the duke de Mayenne; upon which he deemed an escape utterly impossible. The enemies immediately cried out, "*Qui vive?*" when Rosny made known his rank: but as he was on the point of surrendering, what was his astonishment to find that, instead of being attacked, four of the strangers humbly approached him, requesting he would receive them as his prisoners. It appeared so extraordinary to Rosny, that four officers, free from wounds, completely armed, and well mounted, should surrender themselves to a man without any weapon, and covered with blood and scars, that he remained motionless, without being able to reply: he, however, speedily became acquainted with facts, when these captives voluntarily made themselves known; being no other than La Chataigneraye, Sigogne, Chanteloup, and D'Aufreville, who informed him that the duke de Mayenne had lost the battle, and that Henry was pursuing the remains of his routed army. Sigogne, after this recital, as a token of their surrender, delivered up the white standard to Rosny, who, in the exhausted state he then was, could with infinitè difficulty support its weight. The three others of the troop, consisting of the duke de la Trimouille, the knight d'Aumale, and Tremont, did not speak of surrendering: they, however, recommended their four comrades to Rosny; when, beholding a body of the victorious forces coming up, they set spurs to their steeds, and galloped off at full speed. Rosny then ad-

vanced towards the battalion of royalists, and meeting one of the king's pages, delivered into his hands the flag, which he was no longer capable of bearing. After experiencing many other adventures, this trusty friend and brave supporter of his king, was carried to a dwelling, where his wounds were examined and dressed; after which he was transported to the river on a litter, and from thence conveyed by water to his castle at Rosny, whither Henry had repaired; to whom the former expedited, by means of a courier, an account of all that had befallen him. When within a short distance of the castle, Rosny perceived the plain covered with horses and dogs, and the person of the monarch himself, who had just returned from hunting. The king, instantly alighting, ran to the litter, and, in sight of all his attendants, embraced his friend with every demonstration of the most tender affection. Well aware that Rosny, independent of his dangerous wounds, had been trampled under the horses' hoofs, he testified towards him the greatest disquietude; but when he ascertained from the surgeon that he would neither be mutilated nor lamed, Henry threw his arms round his neck, and turning to those who were present, exclaimed in a loud voice, "*That he gave him the title of a true and loyal knight;*" "*a title,*" added the king, "*which I conceive far superior to that of a knight of my order.*" "*Not being able,*" says Sully, "*to throw myself at his feet, and testify my gratitude, I only assured him that I was ready to endure*

ten times as much in his service. He was fearful of exposing me to converse too much, and concluded this interview with his accustomed protestation, that I should participate in all the bounties Heaven might bestow upon him; and without giving me an opportunity of replying, left me, adding these words, Adieu, my friend; take care of yourself, and rest assured that you possess a good master."

The result of the battle of Ivry was the prompt surrender of Mantes and Vernon, which made Henry master of all the bridges on the Seine between Paris and Rouen.

On the day when the king proved victorious at Ivry, his party was also successful at Issoire in Auvergne, where John Louis de la Rochefoucauld, count de Random, commanded in behalf of the League. However, it appears as if fortune, in according these successes to the prince, which might have sufficed to put him in possession of many thrones, took delight at the same time in creating difficulties, and raising obstacles, which left him after his victories nothing but the glory of having conquered.

Henry, in proposing peace, acted with sincerity, according to his uniform practice; and upon this subject conferences were held at Noisy, by which, however, Mayenne's only object was the gaining time in order to retard the king's progress. Henry, although incapable of deception himself, nevertheless possessed infinite penetration in discovering intended bad faith in another; so that, while the enemy sought to amuse him,

he prepared every thing for the blockade of Paris.

Nothing remarkable occurred at the conference of Noisy, except a joke played off by Anne d'Anglure, better known by the name of Givri. Being a brave and most experienced officer, Gaetan, the pope's legate, employed every artifice in order to wean him from the royal party. Finding, however, that his endeavours were unsuccessful, he requested that Givri would at least ask pardon of the pope for the *past*, in the person of his representative. Givri, assuming a devout air, prostrated himself at the feet of the prelate, craving pardon for the evils committed against the Parisians, and demanding a general absolution; when the cardinal, perfectly satisfied, acceded to his wishes. Givri, still continuing on his knees, then added, "*Pray give me absolution also for what is still to happen, because I feel fully disposed to do them as much injury in future:*" he then arose, and instantly retired from the assembly. Although this joke created a laugh; nevertheless, on account of the legate, the spectators, and even the royalists themselves, felt mortified, and offered excuses, after which the interview terminated as it had begun, with expressions of politeness on either side.

About this time, which was the month of May, died cardinal de Bourbon, an event that caused the leaguers very great embarrassment. Until that juncture every thing had been transacted in

the name of Charles the Tenth; and a coin was struck, of which specimens are still preserved in the collections of the curious, bearing for inscription *Carolus X. D. G. Francorum Rex.* It was consequently necessary to decide under what standard the League should in future carry on the war. The absence of the duke de Mayenne and the impediments occasioned by the siege of Paris, caused these deliberations to be postponed to a future opportunity. It has been asserted that if Henry had marched forward, and encamped before the walls of Paris immediately after the affair of Ivry, that city, completely paralyzed, would have thrown open its gates: a supposition by no means improbable. But when we call to mind the situation in which the king was then placed, it is impossible to reproach him. After that signal victory a general meeting took place in his army; for the warriors, proud of their martial exploits, became emboldened by those triumphs that were the result of Henry's talents and intrepidity. Independent of this the troops were in want of money, which created universal murmurings; the Swiss, in particular, peremptorily declared that they would not advance another step until they were paid what was owing to them. The king, therefore, without money, or the means of procuring a supply, proceeded to Mantes, in order to draw an advance from the subintendant of the finances. Henry, however, found nothing but unwillingness. During this period of difficulty, when the royal treasures became a prey to the first occu-

pant, it was almost impossible to procure any regular account, as the royal revenues scarcely sufficed to feed the cupidity of the financiers, who were solely occupied in one study, that of falsifying their accounts in such a manner as absolutely to confuse every point, and at the same time remove all responsibility from themselves. Notwithstanding this, Henry discovered such gross frauds that he ultimately procured the restitution of many sums, which relieved him from his most urgent embarrassments. It was at this period, when, conversing with Rosny on his actual situation, he remarked that he had until that period been so infamously served in his affairs, that he had never been able to adopt any fixed plan; to which he added the following remark, containing so much sterling good sense: "*I have frequently indulged desires, but I have never yet witnessed the season when I might form designs.*" In fact, every success Henry obtained became the source of new divisions in his army between the catholics and the Calvinists. If a town was surrendered, the leaders of both parties equally sought to obtain its government; it could of course only fall to the lot of one, which gave occasion for murmurings with all the rest. It generally happened that in case the catholic faction did not predominate, the consequence was a desertion of many, who, from spite, went over to the party of the League. It was this consideration that prompted the king to favour the catholics rather more than the reformers, which awakened

the indignation of the Calvinists, who accused the monarch of injustice and ingratitude; while they would sometimes go so far as to quit the king in a rage, proceed to their castles, and there abandon themselves to those humours which caused a failure in operations of the highest importance. It must be allowed that, uniformly recalled by honour, and the attachment which it was impossible not to feel for the best and the greatest of princes, they ultimately returned to their duty; but their discontent always proved prejudicial to those affairs and military operations, which required the greatest promptitude. Even Rosny, the faithful friend Rosny, while expressing his heartfelt regret, accuses himself in his Memoirs of not having always been exempt from this weakness, so prejudicial to the service of the master he adored. After the battle of Ivry he was desirous of being appointed to the government of Mantes, which Henry designed for a catholic, and actually gave to Rosny's younger brother. Notwithstanding this delicate attention, Rosny confesses he was so irritated at the personal refusal, that under pretext of his wounds, which certainly incapacitated him from serving at that period, he requested the monarch's permission to retire to his estates, and left him with a determination of never returning to the court. It is true, however, says our author, that upon the first news of the siege of Paris, brought back by his invincible inclination for the king, he immediately returned, though supported

on crutches and wearing one arm in a sling, which, continues our authority, did not prevent him from mounting on horseback and following the king. It was amidst these storms, incessantly fomented, that Henry with ability, courage, and constancy, which can never be too much admired, slowly advanced, by multiplying his victories, to acquire a throne, which he would have attained with ease in a few months had he been uniformly well seconded by those of his party.

The king, having resolved to lay siege to Paris, marched at the head of his forces: becoming master of Dreux, and then proceeding to Lens, of which town, from news forwarded, he conceived he should soon be in possession; but finding himself deceived, he advanced direct upon the capital, taking all the small towns that occurred on his route. On arriving at Paris, Henry took possession of the suburbs; and there is no doubt, that, if he had followed up the attacks briskly, the city would have soon been carried. The natural goodness, however, of his heart prevailed, and he preferred a blockade, fearing, that in case of an assault his protestant followers would have renewed all the horrors of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew. The duke de Mayenne, who had proceeded to gain the assistance of the prince of Parma, was then absent from Paris, of which the duke de Nemours was left governor, to whom Henry wrote, requiring him to surrender; concluding his temperate and kind letter in these words:—

"*I beg of you to remember the past; to direct your attention to what may happen, and to recognize me for that which I ought to be—your king and good friend.* HENRI."

This communication was productive of no beneficial effect; but cardinal de Gondi, bishop of Paris, who was really desirous of peace, proposed to become the mediator. The chiefs of the League acquiesced, merely with a hope of delaying the king's operations; for, expecting the duke of Parma, they were resolved to persist in the rebellion. At one of these conferences the king attended in person; displaying affability of manners, and the most liberal conduct; and, instead of evincing the resentment of a monarch so often victorious and justly irritated, showed all the tenderness of an indulgent father. Being surrounded by his nobility, and some one having remarked that so great a crowd might incommode him, Henry made answer, "*I am pressed in a very different manner on the day of battle.*"

The bad faith of the chiefs of the League caused the failure of all these conferences. Cardinal Gondi discovered this duplicity; and was so indignant, that he immediately laid the truth before the king, informing him at the same time, that he should retire from Paris, and never reenter the city but with his majesty; when, without loss of time, he immediately repaired to his residence at Noisy. A great number of French bishops, says Mezeray, and all the ecclesiastics who were enlightened by real piety, manifested similar

sentiments, and followed the cardinal's example; so that hypocrites and weak-headed enthusiasts constituted the class of adherents for rebellion; the former of whom might have been unmasked, and the latter brought to reason, by a quiet perusal of the Evangelists.

Sully states, that during the above conference which took place between Henry and cardinal Gondi, the former addressed that dignitary in the following words, which, contrasted with the deceptive conduct of the League, no doubt, tended to make the cardinal adopt the above line of conduct: "*I am no dissembler; I speak roundly, and without disguise, all that weighs upon my heart. I am anxious for peace: I would forfeit one finger to give battle; and for a general pacification, I would sacrifice two. I love my city of Paris, she is my eldest daughter; I am jealous of her, I wish to do her good, and to dispense more graces and mercy than she requires at my hand; but I am desirous it should be due to me, and not to the duke de Mayenne and the king of Spain.*"

To such a pitch was fanatical enthusiasm carried, in order to inspirit the populace to revolt, that a ridiculous procession was set on foot by the various religious orders, habited for the most part in armour over their monastic robes, with helmets on their heads, swords at their sides, some bearing pikes or halberds, and others musquets. These infuriate monks marched through the city four abreast, being headed by Roze, bishop of Senlis, supporting a crucifix in one hand, and

a long pike in the other. This ecclesiastic was one of the most determined of the League, and a seditious preacher, who, in his sermons, justified the regicide James Clement. In the procession, a Scotch priest, named Hamilton, curate of Saint Come, and many others of the fraternity, officiated as serjeants; the retinue halting at different periods to repose and fire off volleys of musquetry, mingled with hymns and canticles. This spectacle, however, had very nearly proved fatal to the pope's legate, who, chancing to encounter the troop at the end of the bridge Notre Dame, commanded his carriage to stop, when the actors in this farce, anxious to do honour to the papal representative, fired a grand volley: on which occasion, either some inexperienced hand, or an evil-minded individual whose piece was charged with ball, killed the secretary, who sat beside the legate. The dignitary then made signs with his hand for the performers to cease their fire, while they, conceiving that he gave his benediction, redoubled their discharges of musquetry; wherefore, apprehensive lest a second ball might perhaps be shot, he ordered his coachman to quit the spot, who immediately drove away at full speed. Notwithstanding such flagrant proceedings, when Henry mounted the throne, he prohibited any inquiry from being set on foot respecting the rebellious conduct of Roze, bishop of Senlis, whom he left in the quiet enjoyment of his bishopric.

The duke de Nemours, says Perefixe, was in-

defatigable in preparing for the defence of Paris; and the inhabitants being for the most part persuaded, that if the king took the city, he would establish protestantism, and abolish the mass, assisted with equal ardour, by supplying funds and manual labour.

It is, continues our authority, a striking trait in the history of those times, to read at length the narrative of the blockade of Paris, the orders issued by Nemours, the garrisons established in various quarters, the sorties made during the first months, the inventions resorted to for the purpose of exciting popular enthusiasm, and the negotiations carried on under the hope of coming to an understanding.

The king having cut off every communication that could afford succour to the population of Paris, the citizens at the end of one month began to feel all the disquietudes resulting from the certainty of an approaching famine: the capital at that period contained three hundred thousand souls, but, when the blockade was effected, there were only two hundred thousand.

A scarcity of bread was soon manifested, and at length it could not be procured. The inhabitants began to murmur, when they were appeased by flowery orations and money that was distributed. But the stores being quite exhausted, the people, throwing aside the useless coin, cried out while groaning with hunger—"*No more money, give us bread.*" The duchesses of Montpensier, Nemours, and Aumale, intrepid leaguers,

paraded through the streets of Paris distributing with their own hands provisions to the most clamorous, at the same time exhorting them to have patience.

The worthless doctors of the Sorbonne, who had continued in the capital, then issued a new decree, whereby all Frenchmen *were prohibited from acknowledging for king, Henri de Bourbon, a heretic and a relapse, even in case he should obtain absolution.* This decision was published on the seventh of May 1590, in the Great Hall of the College of Sorbonne, whither all the doctors had been summoned to attend.

It is to be remarked that the forced abjuration of Henry proved one of the greatest impediments to his mounting the throne; since at the period of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, if, instead of embracing the catholic faith, he had firmly resisted the menaces of Charles the Ninth, the court of Rome would not have raised so many objections to the granting him absolution, when he in the second instance abjured the protestant faith, in order to enjoy the throne in tranquillity.

The absurdity of this instrument issued by the Sorbonne, was only equalled by its infamy; since, according to the phrase *even in case he should obtain absolution,* those factious doctors ranged themselves among the class of heretics, thus declaring beforehand, that they would not submit to the decision of the sovereign pontiff, and thereby depriving him of the most sacred and beneficial power he possessed, in the eyes of

a catholic, namely, that of unchaining the conscience, and absolving the errors of a sinner.

Perefixe states, the king had been led to hope that when the Parisians should have beheld the market-places for seven or eight days without flour, the butchers' shops empty, the port with no supplies of corn or wine, and the various other commodities with which it was usually covered for the victualling of the city, they would have forcibly compelled their leaders to ratify a treaty with him; or in case a seditious movement did not immediately prompt them to adopt such measures, hunger would drive them to terms in fifteen days. In fact, Paris only contained supplies for five weeks; but the provisions were distributed with the greatest precaution; therefore the persons who gave Henry such information were far from being acquainted with the real sentiments of the inhabitants. The Parisians, patient and enduring, suffered with fortitude, so that there were few extremes they would not endure, when properly dealt with, and the welfare of religion was the object in question. It is indeed astonishing to peruse the account given of the blind obedience and constant union of that fierce and untractable populace, during the term of four months when losses and misery weighed upon the French capital.

The dearth in Paris augmented hourly, so that the natives were reduced to the necessity of subsisting upon horses, asses, dogs, cats, rats, and every other species of animal, as well as the grass

that grew in the public streets, which had become a desert. That capital of a great kingdom, the former receptacle of magnificence, and abounding in arts and pleasures, now presented the horrid picture of misery, famine, and despair. Death, not rapid or unexpected, but terrible and menacing, hourly marked the fresh victims who were conducted by slow steps to one immense tomb, that seemed to yawn and threaten the whole population of that devoted city. The inhabitants, exhausted, had no longer the power to revolt, nor even to bury the dead; the wretched Parisians wandered about like so many shadows, and dragged their emaciated bodies along streets whither they were led as by instinct! They implored without hope and with looks of despair, says Mezeray, for some trifling sustenance; and so far were they reduced by starvation, as only to be able to articulate one half of the supplication for relief. The adders and serpents, engendered in the half-ruined and abandoned mansions, gnawed the corrupt bodies that remained unburied. Within those precincts, inaccessible to all human consolation, physical exhaustion deprived bodily anguish of the power of complaining, and silenced the audacity of impatience; nothing was to be seen in every direction but the image of consternation and despair; no piercing shrieks and loud murmurs sounded on the breeze; in every quarter of that desolate city, on the point of destruction, the silence of death was only

interrupted by low moanings, and life was become a mere agony divested of every hope.

Mathieu the historian says, during the famine that reigned in Paris, a cow was worth eighty crowns, a calf half that sum, a sheep thirty-five crowns, a chicken one crown, an egg ten pence, a pound of butter two crowns, &c.

During two months, the period of the continuance of this blockade, thirteen thousand souls perished. This horrid spectacle, however, was insufficient to overcome the criminal obstinacy of the chiefs of the League, but inflicted anguish on the paternal heart of Henry; and this magnanimous prince at length renounced a certain victory, in order to save a rebellious people. No longer able to endure the distress of his enemies, he permitted his officers to send refreshments to their relations and friends, as well as to the ladies; he even suffered waggons loaded with food to pass the gates of the city, and received into his camp the starved wretches who fled thither imploring his protection. On beholding these objects, the king's emotion was so great, that he shed tears, exclaiming, "*O Lord, thou knowest who is the cause, but give me the means of saving those whom my enemies are obstinately determined on sacrificing.*" "Many useless efforts had been made," says Perefixe, "to prevent the monarch's receiving these miserable objects; in vain had the arguments of policy, and the intreaties of the Huguenots, who represented them as rebels un-

worthy of commiseration, been laid before him: the reply of the prince was to the following effect:—"*I am not astonished if the chiefs of the League and the Spaniards have so little compassion for these poor people, being only their tyrants; but for me who am their king and father, I cannot listen to the recital of such calamities without being sensibly touched even to my heart's core. It is not in my power to prevent those from perishing who have imbibed the fury of the League; but, as for such as implore my clemency, to them I must extend my arms.*"

Having thus decided, orders were given that all those who were desirous of quitting Paris, should be received, of whom an immense number, not able to stand upright, dragged themselves on the ground, or advanced upon their hands and knees, while others were carried, the whole however employing the little remaining strength they possessed in crying "*Long live the king!*" There is no doubt that if Henry had remained inflexible, the city must in a few days have surrendered at discretion; he therefore lost this conquest from motives of the purest humanity. The Parisians profited by his munificence, without ceasing to regard him in the first instance as the author of this public misery; wherefore, upon the arrival of the prince of Parma, they insulted the monarch who had only raised the siege from feelings of sensibility towards the unfortunate besieged. Is it then possible that such goodness should be productive of no other beneficial results than the gratifying of the soul and the conscience?

Doubtless, not; it is of more sterling utility than all the calculations of policy; it is more glorious than the acquisition of twenty battles. The Parisians, cured of their delirium, called to their recollection with sentiments of admiration such touching magnanimity, and from age to age they have handed down this godlike action to their progeny, which was in itself sufficient to immortalize our hero with the title of Henry the Great. On the page of history, heroic courage is commonly to be met with, even among barbarous nations; but, with monarchs, the heroism of goodness, as rare as it is sublime, alone ranks worthy the homage of all mankind, and is the sole sentiment which can inspire a reasonable, pure, and lasting enthusiasm.

The duke de Mayenne, who had repaired to the prince of Parma and Plaisance, then Alexander Farnese, son of Octavius Farnese and Margaret of Austria, daughter of the emperor Charles the Fifth, was received with that cold air of disdain, which rebels to the legitimate authority of their sovereign must always experience on the part of foreign princes, even when they become their allies. All men who enter into a culpable compact with the national enemies of their country, must, of necessity, expect to encounter similar humiliations. After numerous insulting difficulties had been started, Farnese at length promised the assistance of fifteen thousand men; haughtily declaring to the duke, that he would not confide those

troops to his authority, but lead them in person. Mayenne, who had flattered himself with a hope that he should be invested with the sole command, was compelled to tolerate this affront in silence. The prince, in consequence, set forward with the flower of his army in the Low Countries, conducting also the necessary ammunition and a train of artillery, which would have sufficed for a much more numerous force; and this army he united with the remnants of the troops commanded by the duke de Mayenne.

Thus circumstanced, Henry, in order that he might not be hemmed in between Paris and an army superior in numbers to his own, was under the necessity of abandoning the siege; but, as the soldiers were buoyed up with an expectation of plundering the city, the king was compelled to spread the report that he only quitted Paris for the purpose of encountering the prince of Parma, and terminating the struggle by a decisive action. Henry, when addressing his troops on the subject of glory and battles, was always certain of finding obedience; and the army in consequence prepared with alacrity, and without murmuring, to commence the march, calculating on victory beforehand, and a speedy return to reap, in the sackage of Paris, an ample recompense for their toils, and the blood they had shed in supporting their legitimate monarch Henry the Great.

END OF VOL. I.

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